SUNDAY-SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S GUIDE

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# THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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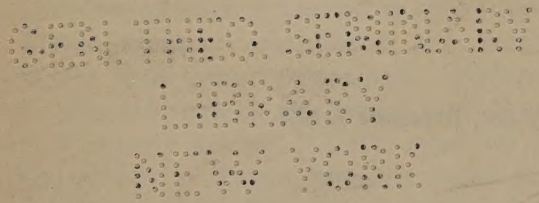
# THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

BY

REV. PATRICK J. SLOAN
Author of "The Sunday-School Teacher's Guide to Success"



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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,
*Archbishop of New York.*

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# PREFACE

Scarcely two years have passed since our Holy Father Pius X gave to the Catholic world his encyclical on "The Teaching of Christian Doctrine." That a special blessing of God has accompanied this letter is manifest from the almost miraculous results, countless and eternal, which it is everywhere effecting.

To us in America, it came as a message most opportune. Here the growth of Catholicity is rapid and vigorous. New parishes are being formed in every diocese. Those already established are becoming larger and better organized. Millions of people are seeking the kingdom of Heaven, and eagerly asking, "What must we do to be saved?" These persons must be instructed in the doctrines of Christ thoroughly and at once. Otherwise, they will yield to the influence of an unbelieving world, wander away into paths of sin, and be lost to the Church and God. Hence this work, entrusted by Christ Himself to those having charge of souls, is one of fun-

damental and supreme importance. "The first and chief duty of pastors," declared the holy Council of Trent, "is to teach the faithful in Christian doctrine." "No duty weightier than this," adds our Holy Father in his recent encyclical, "is appointed unto priests, and none binds under stricter obligation." If the people would be saved, and especially the children, they must be instructed in Christian doctrine. This is certain.

Hence no nobler or more Christlike endeavor is possible to a priest entrusted with the care of souls than that of laboring to organize and maintain in his parish an efficient school of Christian doctrine, which is fully equipped with all needed helps and conveniences, which is regularly and punctually attended by all the children, which has lessons well learned and members favorably disposed, which is properly classified and adequately supplied with competent teachers, and in which there is exerted an activity so systematically controlled and directed that the greatest possible good is being accomplished in the work of salvation.

No matter how devoutly zealous a priest may be, however, or how strenuously he

may labor to save the children, his efforts will result in lamentable failure unless he knows clearly and definitely both what is to be accomplished and how this may best be done. None more thoroughly than pastors who are earnestly striving to perform as best they can the work of the Master, realize the truth of this fact; and hence none more gladly than they welcome any suggestions or helps which make their duties to the Sunday-school more evident and the fulfilment of the same more certain and complete.

To afford some assistance to those who are laboring in the work of teaching Christian doctrine, is the sole purpose of this volume. The principles and methods of catechetical instruction found therein have been carefully and deliberately gleaned from the various sources. The best of experience has pronounced them to be most practical and efficacious. They are expressed in a form as clear, direct, concise, and yet comprehensive as was found possible, and are submitted, without embellishment or circumlocution, to the serious and prayerful consideration of pastors and Sunday-school directors. These methods may be old, but they are of vital and su-

preme importance, and adapted by wise usage to new needs and conditions. They have brought great success to many; if rightly followed, under like circumstances they will bring a similar success to all, by pointing out and lighting up the way along which the little ones of Christ may be led nearer unto His sacred Heart and more surely and safely into heaven.

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# CHAPTER I

## NECESSITY AND PURPOSE OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

*Its Necessity Has Always Been Recognized.*—Religious instruction has been considered from the very beginning as vitally essential to the well-being of God's people. God spoke to our First Parents in the Garden of Paradise, instructed them in His holy truth, and revealed unto them His divine will. Our First Parents repeated to their children what they had learned from their Creator. The patriarchs and the prophets taught and explained to the people the divinely revealed truth. The Doctors of the law did the same. Even in the days of Christ, religious instruction was given in the home, in the school, and in the synagogue. On the afternoon of the Sabbath, the Jewish synagogue became a "Beth-ha-midrash," a house of search, or study. In some ways this resembled our present Sunday-school.

Christ while still a boy of twelve years

was found by His blessed Mother and foster-father in the Temple, asking and answering questions about the revealed truth and the divinely given law. At the age of thirty, when He began His public mission of teaching and saving the world, He not only preached formal sermons to the multitude, but He also taught His truth catechetically; that is, He explained this in words, figures, and parables, so simple and yet so sublime that even the lowly shepherds, as they listened to His discourse, beheld new worlds of truth, beautifully pictured. The early Christian Church modeled its method of religious instruction largely on that of Christ, the Teacher of Man. This Saviour and God of all sent His apostles forth to "teach all nations" whatsoever He had commanded them. Therefore it has always been the bounden duty of the Church to teach through duly ordained bishops, priests, and ministers this truth to all people; and, likewise, it has ever been the God-imposed obligation of the people to receive this truth as from on high, to learn its import, and to obey its commands. This mission the Church has never ceased to perform. The doctrines taught have always been essentially the

same. The methods employed for teaching this doctrinal truth, however, have been varied from time to time, and in many ways have been improved during the ages.

*The True Purpose of the Sunday-School is Teaching and not Preaching.*—In the pulpit the truths of Christianity are proclaimed in a formal and oratorical manner. This is termed preaching. In the Sunday-school hall, they are set forth rather in a conversational way. They are so explained and illustrated by question and answer, figure, parable, and story, that the merest child can grasp the essential meaning, and by a process of mental assimilation make it a part of life's existence. This is teaching. It is developing in the mind of the child a picture, clear and comprehensive, of truth, natural and revealed, in its proper coloring and perspective, and then inducing the child to model into conformity with this his life and existence.

The preacher proclaims a doctrine in a general and comprehensive manner; while the teacher first ascertains with which part of the truth the child is already familiar, and then tactfully leads him on to the knowledge of the remainder which is as yet unknown. The preacher speaks to the con-

gregation; the teacher to the individual. The preacher strives to influence, guide, and ennoble public sentiment, opinion, and activity; the teacher to mold and Christianize personal character. As a sculptor, he goes from soul to soul, remedying defects, chiseling away deformities, and beautifying all.

*The Sunday-School Should Educate Each Child in His Religion.*—Its first duty, however, is to care for those children whose parents are regular Church members. This is only just. Those families which attend, assist, and support a church, have the first right to share in its blessing and service. In fact, generally speaking, they are the ones which will derive the greatest and most lasting benefit therefrom. No matter how careless some parents of a parish may be, however, their children should not be abandoned or neglected. All possible should be done for each. The individual child must be developed into a practical Church member with a permanently formed Christian character.

*The Sunday-School Should Develop Each Child into a Practical Church Member.*—The children of to-day will form the

congregations of the near future. As the children are now, the parishioners will be then. Those who are now permitted to leave the Sunday-school deficient in Christian knowledge and religious training will prove of little assistance or credit to the future Church. Their influence will tend to demoralize and contaminate all with whom they come in contact; and, as to their own salvation, it will be exposed to the greatest peril. On the other hand, children who are thoroughly educated in Christian doctrine and rightly trained in Catholic practice will appreciate their holy religion and learn to love their Church more and more as their days of life pass by. They will generously respond to its every demand of needed sacrifice, be loyal to its interest, zealous in laboring to extend its influence, and assiduous in striving by all just means to increase its honor and glory. Their influence will be uplifting and Christianizing, and their salvation will be practically assured. For a time they may be induced to wander from the path of virtue, but experience generally shows that sooner or later the grace of God and a rightly-formed conscience will impel them

to return. The work of educating each child into a practical Church member is therefore one of vital importance.

*For Accomplishing This Work the Best and Most Effective Methods Should be Employed.*—Since no work is more sacred, none more vitally important and lasting in its results than that of saving human souls from unending misery and bringing them safely into the realms of joy and glory eternal, it evidently follows, that the means and methods employed for the accomplishment of this work should be such as will effect the salvation of the greatest number. This has ever been the unwavering conviction of Christ's holy Church.

*Improved Methods Are Especially to be Desired at the Present Time.*—Modern methods of secular education are vastly different from those employed fifty or even twenty-five years ago. They are in many ways supremely superior. The great majority of our Sunday-school children are attending the day-schools, public or parochial, and are more or less familiar with this fact. In many Sunday-schools, however, scholarly and systematic methods are to a great extent lacking. The young people who attend these, naturally begin at

once to perceive a manifest deficiency and a deplorable ineffectiveness, and to realize that they are not acquiring in the Sunday-school the knowledge of their religion and the spiritual advantages which they should. As a result, they soon lose interest in the recitation, become dissatisfied, and withdraw. This evil can be remedied, at least to a great extent, by maintaining in our Sunday-schools both the scholarly method and the thorough efficiency which are found in the day-schools.

*Requirements Essentially Necessary for Making the Sunday-School a Success.*— For bringing the Sunday-school up to the high standard of efficiency desired, certain requirements are indispensable. A trained superintendent must be had, competent teachers secured, suitable helps supplied, and a proper system of grading maintained.

1. A trained superintendent must be had. This is generally to be found in the person of the pastor or his assistant. Whenever it is at all possible, the parish priest ought always to be the superintendent of his own Sunday-school. Even the priest, however, can not successfully organize and efficiently conduct a Sunday-

school without much preparatory study and labor. A practical preparation for this work should begin, in fact, during the seminary course, and should be continued day after day from the time of ordination until that of death. This is the priest's first duty in regard to the Sunday-school, but not his only one. For so great and so varied is the work of the ordinary Sunday-school, that it requires the united labor of several persons to effect its successful accomplishment.

2. Trained teachers are needed. The teachers assisting in the Sunday-school should compare favorably with those of the day-school. Too often these teachers are found to be almost entirely untrained and to possess little or no skill for their work. Their ideas of Christian doctrine are not clear-cut, practical, and comprehensive, but crude and indefinite. As to the blessings which Christianity offers and the obligations which it imposes, they are to a great extent ignorant. They even neglect to study and master the lesson to be taught, and hence are incapable of impressing this on the minds of their pupils. They know almost nothing of the principles and methods on which successful teaching is based.

They lack natural ability and aptitude for the work. In a word, they are in many cases entrusted with the charge of a class solely because competent and desirable teachers can not be secured. To remedy this evil, a special effort must be made to train and qualify a suitable teaching force for the Sunday-school. The vital importance of this can scarcely be exaggerated. It is becoming ever more manifest, and as the years pass by more stress is being laid on it by zealous and devoted pastors. In many parishes, teachers' classes have been formed, teachers' meetings maintained, and teachers' institutes held for the purpose of supplying the required number of competent teachers. It would be well and of great advantage if the weekly Sunday-school lessons could be so graded that all the children could be taught the same topic on the same Sunday. Then the pastor could hold a weekly meeting of his teachers, and together they could discuss the lesson assigned and the most successful methods of presenting this to the pupils, and of impressing it on their minds and hearts.

3. Suitable helps should be supplied. It is practically impossible to conduct a

successful Sunday-school without convenient rooms, standard text-books, blackboards, maps, and so forth. These, in as far as it is possible, should be supplied promptly and adequately.

4. The Sunday-school should be properly graded. The success of our day-schools is greatly increased by their system of grading and there is no doubt that a similar system would immeasurably increase our Sunday-school's efficiency for good. A complete system of grading may not be feasible in those small country parishes where there are at most only twenty-five or thirty children; but in the larger towns and cities it is possible and most desirable. For a crying fault, due at least in part to the present system, is that our boys and girls depart from the Sunday-school hall just at the age when they become able to realize the significance and appreciate the value of religious instruction. In fact, they leave the Sunday-school even at the very beginning of life's most critical period, at the very time when they most need its sustaining and Christianizing influence to keep them from being allured into sin and vice. Our Sunday-school should do all in its power to retain

among its members and under its instruction not only the little children, but also the youth, in fact, the young men and the young women of the parish. To effect this, the Sunday-school itself must be unusually attractive, the course of study must be so arranged that a broader and deeper view of Christianity is presented to the pupils during their every successive year, and the recitations must be so conducted as to make the members of the Sunday-school realize and appreciate the fact, that by their continued attendance they are acquiring a better and more helpful knowledge of their religion. Of late, we are glad to say, much time and thought has been devoted to the arrangement of a well-defined course of Sunday-school study, such as will impart to those who pursue it a practical and thorough knowledge of Christian doctrine. Even greater effort in this must be had in order to bring the methods employed in our Sunday-schools up to the high standard which modern education requires. A more thorough system of grading than that now found in many of our Sunday-schools is not only a thing to be desired, but a necessity, and there is no adequate reason why it should not be had.

For the fundamental idea of proper grading is not so complex as at first thought it may seem. It is in fact remarkably simple, and can be carried out to some extent in the smaller Sunday-schools as well as in the larger ones. In all things, however, this system of grading should be so arranged and modified as to be adapted to the individual Sunday-school, class, and pupil. In the Sunday-school, nothing should be tolerated which is detrimental or useless, or which from its very nature does not most efficiently concur to the accomplishment of one grand result, the development of practical Church members, possessed of strong Catholic characters.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RELATION OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TO THE CHURCH

*The Sunday-School is a Department of the Church.*—The Sunday-school should always be recognized as a most important and vitally essential part of the Church. It is the school wherein the pastor, assisted by a corps of competent teachers, labors week after week with the children of his parish, striving by all available means to train and develop them into practical Catholics. In as far as he succeeds in this, he increases the membership of the Church, militant and triumphant. This is truly the work of Christ carried on by His disciples. It can not be accomplished, however, without expense.

*The Sunday-School Should be Supported by the Church.*—The financial support required for the maintenance of the Sunday-school should be supplied judiciously, yet freely, by the Church. Moreover, as soon as the pastor is convinced that class-rooms,

blackboards, maps, papers, and other helps are needed for bringing his Sunday-school up to the high standard of efficiency desired, he should, in as far as the means at hand will permit, supply these without hesitation. This will necessitate an expenditure of money. Suppose it does? The people are willing and glad to furnish money which they see well expended in the defraying of needed Church expense; and no person of common sense can visit one of those Sunday-schools wherein he beholds the children crowded together into one confused, restless, noisy mass of youthful humanity without realizing the utter impossibility of priest or teacher imparting amid such surroundings the necessary religious instruction or training. To conduct a successful recitation amid such environment is in fact a moral impossibility. The religious instruction of such children is being neglected; and often this is permitted simply because those in charge are so accustomed to this slovenly way of conducting Sunday-school that they have grown indifferent or at least blind to its flagrant defects, or else because, for pecuniary reasons, they are unwilling to incur what

is wrongly deemed an unnecessary expense. "These Sunday-schools were good enough for the children of fifty years ago, and they are good enough for the children of to-day," is sometimes said. Such a course of reasoning is not only illogical, but false and criminal. An efficient Sunday-school can not be maintained without suitable rooms and apparatus, and it is most unwise for any parish to be wilfully delinquent in supplying these. For in as far as the Sunday-school fails in the accomplishment of its sacred mission, the children stroll away from the Church into paths of sin and vice, and even the parents become similarly negligent in their religious devotion and practice. Into the attractive and successful Sunday-school, however, children of all classes and of all denominations gather. Assisted and influenced by its teaching and training, they daily come to understand more thoroughly the doctrines of Christianity, and, as a result, to make more cheerfully the sacrifices which their Church requires and to fulfill more gladly the obligations which it imposes. From their souls, as from living mirrors, the truth, the power, and the

beauty of Christ is reflected in the lives of all about them, tending to enlighten, to beautify, and to transform all into practical members of the Catholic Church.

## CHAPTER III

### THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*The Spiritual in the Sunday-School Must Animate the Material.*—That the Sunday-school should be properly organized and equipped no one will deny. More than this, however, is required. For although its organization were perfect and its equipment adequate to every need, so long as it would remain devoid of spiritual life it would be like unto a beautifully formed human body from which the soul was absent. This should be well borne in mind, for it seems but natural in Sunday-school, as in other kinds of Church work, to place the material success above the spiritual. It is more easily achieved. To systematize a Sunday-school and to maintain intact its mechanical organization, is far easier than to spiritualize it and to hold it continually up to a high religious standard. Material success wins greater applause from the world. It is more manifest, more attrac-

tive, makes a more brilliant display, and appeals more to our love of modern business methods. Moreover, the world is ever wielding over things spiritual a strong and subtile force of gravity which attracts to earth all that tends to rise heavenward. This power affects in no small measure our every thought and desire. Even in Sunday-school work, instead of spiritual results, as manifested in the conversion of souls, a fuller comprehension of divine truth, and a more ardently practical devotion to God, there is a strong inclination tempting us to rest content with results merely temporal and material, such as thorough organization, methodical system, large and prompt attendance, orderly discipline, music, and the like. Hence unless one is enlightened and guided by the spiritual, he is liable to mistake show for success, and to be more solicitous in promoting the Sunday-school's material advancement than in fostering that religious life which animates its organized body and makes of it an active power for good.

*A Thoroughly Religious Purpose Must Dominate the Entire Sunday-School.*— The aim and purpose of the Sunday-school should be to bring the children to a true

knowledge of God and His creation, and so to educate them that at all times they will find their pleasure in doing His holy will. The child who is rightly instructed in the truths of his holy religion will behold in part with the eyes of faith the selfsame things which the guardian angels behold with eyes angelic, and even as the angels desire to do God's will and thus to live in love and union with Him, so in a lesser measure will the child. To effect this, is the Sunday-school's grandest, holiest mission. The text-book used is generally the catechism of Christian doctrine. Some Sunday-schools succeed in having the catechism memorized word for word, but at the same time fail to teach religion. This is a deplorable, even a criminal fault. For children should study the catechism not merely to memorize verbally its several answers, but primarily to learn therefrom how to live aright with God and man. The whole material element and organization of the Sunday-school should be directed to the accomplishment of this purpose. To what extent is the Sunday-school making human life, temporal and eternal, truer and happier? In how far is it succeeding in making the children more Christian,

more like unto other Christs? These are the questions which determine its real success. Its every aim and influence, its very atmosphere, should be religious. The children should realize at every session that they are assembled for the most important business of life, and that the reward of their presence, study, and prayer is a state of sweet and happy union with God which will continue on through life and find its full consummation in eternity.

## CHAPTER IV

### A GRADED SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION NEEDED IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*A Knowledge of Christian Doctrine Must be Imparted.*—One of the two great accomplishments to be sought by those in charge of the Sunday-school is to bring the members thereof to a knowledge of God's truth. In the days when man first inhabited the earth, there were countless facts concerning the Creator and His creatures unknown to the human family. In order to save us from sin and eternal misery, God revealed in communication, vision, and prophecy many things about our life here on earth, but especially about our eternal existence after death. Christ, the Son of God, became man to give us a clearer knowledge of this truth. Not only did He reveal and explain it more fully to the apostles, but by His divine power He preserved and ever will preserve the Church from error so that, as a living teacher infallible, it teaches at all times

and in all places the selfsame doctrine which He taught in the beginning. Therefore, if we would know the truth revealed of God, we must listen to the infallible voice of Christ speaking to us through His Church. From this fact appears the supreme importance of educating the children to reverence the Catholic Church as the divinely appointed guardian of all revelation, and as the only one on earth which teaches this infallibly. So essentially and fundamentally important is this doctrine of the Church's infallibility, that all possible must be done by the Sunday-school to impress it indelibly on the mind and heart of every child. When this is well accomplished, it will be found comparatively easy to lead the children on to the knowledge of the other doctrines of Christianity as also to an undoubting belief in their truthfulness. But the Sunday-school that fails to effect this, fails in all. It can not save the children from infidelity and moral ruin. For a person, untaught in the truth of God, is like unto a ship unguided by a pilot's hand. When the storms of temptation arise, he is driven hither and thither over the sea of life, until at length he finds himself stranded on the hidden

shoals of sin, wrecked and ruined by the mad fury of tempestuous passion. A practical knowledge of Christian doctrine lights our way as a guiding star. As a hand divine, it guides us safely on through life into heaven. This knowledge is obtained in the Sunday-school principally through a study of the catechism. The catechism is a compendium of God's truth revealed.

*A Systematic Course of Catechetical Study is a Necessity.*—One question now seriously considered and discussed is whether our Sunday-schools are doing all they should in giving the children a thorough knowledge of Christian doctrine. Our present and generally accepted method of catechetical instruction has many most desirable features, and unquestionably has accomplished immense good for humanity through the Church. But methods of education have during recent years made great advance. Who will deny that our schools are teaching in a far different manner and accomplishing far better results to-day than they did twenty-five years ago? A similar advance is not only possible, but urgently needed in our Sunday-school. This can be secured, at least

in a large measure, by means of a systematic and comprehensive course of instruction in Christian doctrine.

*This Course of Study Must be Graded.*—Our Sunday-schools are daily becoming larger, more permanent, more intelligent, and better organized in every way. Since this is true, it naturally follows that more emphasis than formerly is being laid on thoroughness in Christian education. Hence a more systematically graded course of study is demanded. The benefits derived from this are almost countless. It includes a study of all Christian doctrine and imparts a practical, comprehensive, and even scholarly knowledge of the same. It tends to retain in the Sunday-school and under its influence the greatest number of persons from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood and womanhood. Above all it insures not a mere parrot-like repetition of question and answer, a memorizing by brute force of words and phrases to be forgotten soon after final examination, but an intelligent study of Christian doctrine, such as will gradually advance and with every year give a wider scope of vision and a truer comprehension of the things of God. Such a course of study,

lifting the children every year to a higher plane of thought and life, would make the teaching of Christ known as never before. At least, it would remove from the minds of our young people that impression, so prevalent, that, when they have passed the examination required for Confirmation, they have completed their study of God's holy truth or else have become too old to continue it longer. Such a systematic, consecutive, thorough, and ever advancing study of Christian doctrine would instil a new interest into religious belief, infuse a new life into Christian practice, and cause the glorious divinity of the Catholic Church to appear before the world in a transfiguration of its Christ-endowed beauty.

## CHAPTER V

### THE GRADED SYSTEM OUTLINED

*The System Most Approved.*—A variety of systems for instructing the children in Christian doctrine and training them in its practice has been conceived, recommended, and followed by those in charge of parishes and Sunday-schools. The one, however, which seems to receive most popular approval from priest and teacher is essentially as follows:

The children of the parish are divided into eight grades in the same way as are those of the day-school. The reason for this is manifest. The expression "Sunday-school endeavor" is often used to designate not only those instructions in Christian doctrine which are given on Sunday, but also those which are given during the week, whether in the Sunday-school hall or in the class-room of the parochial school; and since the parochial school is and will continue to be *the* place

for educating children in Christianity, the system to be followed must of necessity be one which is adapted to its grades and classes. The children of each grade, however, may be subdivided into as many classes as are deemed advantageous.

A series of catechisms should be had such as will have a special text-book for each grade. More than this, each one of these catechisms should contain the subject-matter for a comprehensive, although brief study of Christian doctrine, so that during each year of their Sunday-school life the individual children may review or study in regular succession at least all the fundamental truths of their religion. Even more, the catechisms of this series should be so prepared that each one of them will have the same number of chapters, one for each week of the Sunday-school year, and that each correspondingly successive chapter will contain an exposition more or less brief of the same doctrine. Then every teacher of the several grades can assign to the members of his respective class the same chapter as that assigned by all the other teachers to the pupils of all the other classes. Were such a series of catechisms rightly used, all the children of the parish

would be studying during each successive week of the Sunday-school year the same chapters and doctrines. Thus, during the first week all would have as a lesson the first chapter, which considers "God"; during the second week, the second chapter, and so on throughout the year. This would serve to bring all into systematic unity, and enable the priest in charge to assemble the Sunday-school children with their teachers and, after reviewing briefly the lesson of the previous week, to explain at length and to illustrate by apt comparison and story the several points of the new lesson assigned for study. The teachers, after having heard this instruction, would be prepared for working with their respective classes, hearing the lesson and explaining its truth. All would be done in accord with the priest's direction and wish.

The catechisms used should not be complete text-books of Christian doctrine from which the children are supposed to master the truths and practices of their religion without any explanation or help from others. They should merely contain a brief and simple synopsis of the instruction to be given by the priest, such as will enable the child to recall to mind the cen-

tral truths and fundamental doctrines considered and to fix these by diligent study indelibly on the memory.

Although the number of chapters found in these several catechisms should be exactly the same, still the number of questions and answers should vary with the grades. In the catechisms prepared for the first grade, only a very few of the most fundamental truths should be considered. For the work of each successively higher grade, more should be added. The catechism used in the sixth grade, or in the Confirmation class, should be complete, containing all the questions and answers found in the other catechisms, given word for word.

Whenever the same question and answer are found in more than one catechism of this series, they should always be expressed in exactly the same words. When once a child has learned a certain answer, he should be made to feel that this is mastered for the entire course, and that to review it in a higher catechism means simply to gain a deeper insight into its truth and a keener appreciation of its value. To compel a child to memorize another set of words expressing this same

truth, would be but to confuse, rather than to make clearer, the knowledge he already has.

Moreover, the questions and answers of any catechism should invariably be as short, and at the same time as intelligible and interesting as possible. In this, however, as in all else, extremes are to be avoided. They should neither be so brief as to demand from the child a course of reasoning of which he is absolutely incapable, nor so long and involved as to completely overtax his untrained memory. But if one must err, too great brevity is preferable to excessive length.

The answers, generally speaking, should constitute short sentences, expressed in language so clear and simple, so natural and familiar to the child, that "word meanings" would be unnecessary. When long and difficult words do appear, as must happen in some few cases if the doctrine treated be rightly expressed, these should be pronounced repeatedly and explained with the greatest care by priest and teacher, until every child is familiar with their sound and meaning. Every word should be rightly pronounced; every answer thoroughly committed to memory;

and every idea well understood and mastered.

Such a series of catechisms, if rightly used with this system of grading, would beyond doubt serve to bring all the endeavor of the Sunday-school into completely organized unity, and at the same time enable all the members thereof to accomplish their best results in the work of salvation.

Although the general endeavor of the Sunday-school is essentially the same in all classes, still there is a special work to be done in each grade.

The first grade, or the elementary kindergarten class. The prayers to be learned and said by the children during this year, as also during each succeeding year, should be at least those which are to be found at the beginning of the catechism used. The purpose of the work should be to give the individual children a comprehensive, although of course a very general knowledge of Christian truth and practice.

The second grade, or the advance kindergarten class. The endeavor in this grade should be to make the children's knowledge of Christianity more clearly

definite and their practice of it more intelligently devout.

The third grade, or the elementary confession class. During this year the children should be well and rightly instructed concerning the committing and the forgiveness of sin, and prepared for receiving the sacrament of Penance worthily.

The fourth grade, or the advanced confession class. The work of the previous grade should be continued in this, and the individual children should be made to have right ideas of sin and virtue, of repentance, atonement, and forgiveness.

The fifth grade, or the first communion class. During this year the children should be prepared for their first holy communion.

The sixth grade, or the Confirmation class. The special work of this grade is to prepare the children to receive the sacrament of Confirmation with proper knowledge and disposition.

The seventh grade, or the Christian doctrine class. The text-book prepared for this grade should differ in one respect from those used during previous years. Its subject-matter should be given briefly and interestingly, not in catechetical, but

in paragraph form. All doctrines previously studied should be thoroughly reviewed and developed along dogmatic lines. Special attention should be given to the source of revealed truth, and to its representation by the Church in sign and ceremony. By this means a fuller knowledge of Christianity should be gained, as also a more thorough realization of its truth, a more intelligent understanding of the reasons for belief, and a keener appreciation of the countless blessings which the Catholic Church offers to its members.

The eighth grade, or the Christian moral class. During this year the doctrines of the preceding grades should be developed along moral lines. The text-book used should give in paragraph form a brief, popular, and practical exposition of those moral duties which as Christians we owe to our neighbor, ourselves, and our God. The children should be taught to know clearly and definitely their moral obligations in life, as well as the penalty for vice and the reward for virtue. Right moral principles should be fixed firmly in their minds and an unwavering fidelity to these fostered in their hearts.

After the children have graduated from

the eighth grade, they are promoted to the advanced department of the Sunday-school. Suitable classes are formed for them and special work assigned. In many parishes the first year's work of this higher course is to pursue a popular and practical study of Church history, from the beginning of man's existence to the present time, reviewing briefly, but truthfully and interestingly, the story of the world's creation, of our First Parents and their fall, of the Deluge, the patriarchs, prophets, judges, and kings; of Christ, His life and Church, of the early persecutions and heresies, the transmigration of nations, the fall of the Roman Empire, the perils of Mohammedanism, the so-called Reformation, secret societies, Socialism, the French Revolution, etc. This course imparts a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the establishment, growth, influence, and achievement of the Church.

After all the work thus far outlined has been well done, it is not found difficult to train the desired number of boys and girls into teachers efficiently qualified for teaching unto others the doctrines and practices of Christianity which have been taught to them. In every parish where the Sunday-

school stands in need of assistance from lay teachers, a training class should be formed to educate and qualify these for the work. In this class the theory and practice of teaching the pupils of the various grades may be given according to best approved and most successful methods.

*A Unified System Should be Followed in Organizing the Sunday-School.*—Since the great duty of instructing the children of the parish in the truths of Christianity and of training them in its practice belongs and always will belong principally to the priest in charge, it is evident that no Sunday-school will attain complete success in its efforts unless it is graded into such organic unity that during each week the priest can explain to all the children the same doctrines which are assigned for study, and train them individually to live in accord with the principles embodied and to practise the devotions recommended and suggested.

*Teachers' Meetings Would Increase both Unity and Efficiency.*—It is almost practically impossible to secure complete unity in Sunday-school work, unless at some time during the week the priest in charge

assembles his teachers for the purpose of preparing with them the lesson which is to be taught during the following week, explaining its doctrines, giving apt comparisons and illustrations, and showing the best methods for teaching this to the children.

Whatever may be said for or against this system, one thing is certain: in those parishes where it is strictly and rationally followed, Catholicity practical, intelligent, and fervent flourishes, few perverts are found, and many are led forth from the dark shades of ignorance and doubt to the clear light of life, spiritual and eternal, the Kingdom of God is present, the rule of Christ is supreme, and the peaceful joy of heaven prevails.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S DUTIES

*The Director Superintends the Sunday-School.*—Wherever many are laboring together to accomplish a certain work, there must be one to superintend and direct the efforts of all. A ship has its captain, a college its president, a church its pastor, and a company its general manager. So also a Sunday-school should have its director. He must call the Sunday-school together, organize it, infuse into it energy and enthusiasm, and direct its efforts to successful achievement. He must conceive the ideal, and labor incessantly to make his Sunday-school ever more like unto this.

*He Must Bring the Pupils Together.*—Especially at the beginning, the children must be informed as to the exact date on which the Sunday-school opens; and they must be made to realize that it is their privilege and duty to attend. Even dur-

ing the entire year, nothing should be left undone to secure the largest and most punctual attendance possible.

*He Must Organize the Sunday-School.*—The pupils must be grouped into classes. This is a most important duty and much is accomplished by doing it properly. The larger the school, the more thoroughly this can be done. In the smaller Sunday-schools where there are at most only three or four teachers, children of different ages and proficiency have, as a matter of necessity, to be placed in the same class. In the larger schools, however, this is unnecessary. Here the director can sort out his pupils at will and place them where they are likely to do their best work.

*He Must Select and Appoint Teachers.*—After he has divided his Sunday-school into classes, he must select for each class that teacher who appears best qualified to conduct its recitations effectively. For the successful accomplishment of this duty, an exact knowledge of human nature, careful inquiry, and serious considerations are required.

*He Must Superintend the Work of the Sunday-School Session.*—An earnest and well-directed activity must be maintained

both among the teachers and the children. Anything which interferes with successful accomplishment should not, even for a moment, be tolerated. All must be kept at its best achievement.

*He Should Open and Close the Sunday-School.*—By calling the Sunday-school to order, saying the opening prayer, and making a few introductory remarks, he impresses his personality on it from the beginning and gives it the desired tone. When the teaching is over, by his closing remarks he brings all scattered thoughts into unity, develops the chief lesson taught, and impresses this clearly and deeply on the minds of those present. One fault, however, the director should carefully avoid, and that is, becoming one of those "talking superintendents" who every now and then interrupt the work of the teachers by thrusting inopportune words and alien ideas before them, such as tend to distraction rather than to concentrate the thought and energy of the school on the work in hand.

*He Must Foster and Maintain a Religious Spirit in the Sunday-School.*—This will be effected largely by his own personal feeling rightly manifested by word

and example. His religion, however, should make him neither frivolous and trifling, nor morose and sullen. It should cause him to be serious, it is true, and yet ever cheerful. His very manner should evidence the fact that he is laboring unselfishly for the temporal and especially the eternal welfare of those entrusted to his charge, and that for each of those he will one day have to render an account to his Judge. His every word must confirm this impression. In this way he must maintain the Sunday-school as an organized body vivified by the soul of religion, empowered by the Spirit of God, and actively exerting a potent influence for the Christianizing of its members, as also for the uplifting of the community at large to a nobler, happier, and more Godlike existence.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DIRECTOR'S NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS

*No Director is Absolutely Perfect.*—Absolute perfection is not found in any creature. No man is without limitations, defects, and faults. In fact, even the greatest of men are in some respects pitiably weak. The director, therefore, should not be discouraged because he does not find realized in himself the ideal of excellence. For some of his duties, he may be partially, even almost entirely, unsuited; while for many others he may be supremely qualified. At any rate he is placed in this position, and he must fulfil its duties as best he can. If he does this, no more can reasonably be expected. Nevertheless, a high ideal of this office should be his to guide and sustain him, and an untiring ambition should urge him ever on to nobler effort.

*Certain Qualifications are Required in a*

*Director.*—What kind of a person should he be?

1. He should be living a consistent life. This is essentially fundamental. A person that is living a sinfully unworthy life, taints all that he does and lessens his own power for good. Example influences more than precept. Any unworthy conduct on the part of a religious teacher appears to the world as proof sufficient that he does not believe what he professes. "As a man thinketh, so he is." His deeds give clearer evidence than his words as to his real convictions. An inconsistent life even brings one's teaching into contempt. Doctrines are tested by their fruit; by the lives of those who profess them. An evil life in one who undertakes to direct religious instruction destroys confidence both in the teacher and in the doctrines taught. Thus even the doctrines of Christianity sometimes appear to the unthinking mind as effete and evil because they are professed by unworthy Christians. For this reason it is important that a Sunday-school director should be one whose life is pure above suspicion, whose business transactions are honest beyond doubt, whose record is clear, whose reputation, even in

civic affairs, is good, whose habits are irreproachable, and whose language and amusement are not open to adverse criticism.

2. He should be a person of practical, sincere piety. It is not enough for him to possess negative virtue, to live without reproach; he should also have virtue of a positive nature. He should be a devout man, full of reverence, of an earnest nature, eager for souls. He is to be the superintendent, the director of an organization engaged in one of the noblest of works. He should be a spiritual man, a man of prayer. Within his heart should burn a desire to do good, to help the multitudes about him. Otherwise he will lack that enthusiasm which inspires and sustains the true leader, and enables him to carry on his work week after week in spite of toil, of opposition, or discouragement.

3. He must have a familiar knowledge of Christian doctrine. He must have clear and definite concepts of that truth which God has revealed to His holy Church and which this Church continues to teach to the world. Otherwise he will not be able to plan the best possible method of instruction for the Sunday-school. One of his

most important duties is to teach those who are teaching. To do this he must have their respect. This he can not rightly claim unless he has mastered the knowledge which he strives to impart. He can not picture forth the truths of Christianity for the consideration of others, unless he has first formed a picture of these in his own mind.

4. He should possess administrative ability. The Sunday-school, as found in our larger churches, is an organization complicated and elaborate. The director of this must be an organizer, a man of expedients, one who can control, subordinate, and direct the activities of those under his charge. The school is to be classified and graded, teachers are to be appointed and changed, appliances of all sorts are to be furnished, and needs peculiar and unexpected are to be supplied. This requires something of a genius. In fact, the person who can keep a large Sunday-school in steady motion, always doing its appointed work, always growing and thriving, and yet never developing friction or turning from its course, is nothing less than a genius in administration.

5. He must be strong-willed but not

self-willed. In this matter, it is difficult to keep an even poise. A leader fails if he is weak, and he fails none the less if he is headstrong. Many things must be decided. The director must have ideas of his own, and be able to act independently. He must be alert, energetic, and push on undisturbed by indifference and unjust opposition. Otherwise he will fail.

On the other hand, he should not be obstinate and unwilling to listen to the suggestions of others, or to adopt their ideas when, after impartial consideration, he finds them better than his own. His motto should be: "The good, the best, wherever found." He depends on the teachers for many things. He can not succeed without their co-operation, and hence he can not afford to reject, as a despot, their opinions and suggestions. In as far as he undertakes to do this, the good of the Sunday-school will suffer. All must be maintained in harmony, all must labor together in one work under one head, and for one grand purpose, the ennobling and Christianizing, the salvation and sanctification of immortal souls.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DIRECTOR PRESERVING ORDER

The order of a Sunday-school depends largely on the priest or director in charge. If this one be of strong personality, he will impress his idea of order on the whole school.

*Punctuality is of Prime Importance.*—In maintaining order, the first thing to be secured is punctuality, for the tardy arrival of late comers into the Sunday-school hall is sure to cause more or less confusion. Tardiness can be lessened, if not eliminated, in many ways. The Sunday-school should be opened exactly at the moment specified. Such a spirit of honor in regard to punctuality should be developed that both pupils and teachers feel ashamed to disturb the school by entering late. While the opening prayer is being said the doors should be closed, so that the disturbance of tardy pupils stepping heavily on the floor may not cause distraction

and interference. It would prove advantageous for the director to be on hand somewhat early, and to extend cordial greetings to pupils and especially to teachers. This expression of gratification would certainly tend to encourage punctuality.

*The Sunday-School Must be Brought to Order.*—Exactly at the time appointed for the opening, the director should call the Sunday-school to order. This is done twice during the session, once at the opening and again at the close. A quiet but firm manner will generally prove effective. The call to order should not be often repeated, as this tends to develop indifference. The teachers and the pupils soon learn to expect these frequent calls, and pay little or no heed to them. A repeated striking of the bell produces the same effect. It does not promote order, but rather causes all to feel that by and by quiet will come and then talking must cease. A single call to order, firm and dignified, ought to be enough. "The Sunday-school will please come to order," following a single stroke of the bell, or either one of these means alone, will in time suffice. If order and quiet do not come at

once, let the director simply wait. If he commands the respect of those before him, this silent waiting will at length impress the school, and effect the desired result.

*A Spirit of Reverence Must Prevail.*—This is next to be secured. It will promote order. Good order is the outgrowth of feeling, and a devout feeling in the house of God is sure to produce quiet. But the director can not make others feel that which he does not feel himself. If he would make others reverential, a feeling of reverence must fill his own heart. If he has this feeling, it will be manifest in his manner of saying the opening prayer. If he makes any announcements, they should be as brief as possible. In his bearing he should avoid all affectation and sanctimoniousness, and yet he should strive by his whole manner to impress all with the fact that they are met on serious business and are face to face with God.

*Quiet Must be Maintained during the Session.*—To maintain quiet order during the recitation hour is primarily the duty of the priest superintending. The first thing to be done after the opening prayer and remarks is to see that each class is supplied with a teacher. Teachers who are to

be absent should inform the director beforehand, so that the vacancy may then be filled. All classes which remain for any considerable time without teachers become sources of disorder. Youthful humanity will almost invariably take advantage of the teacher's absence by whispering and playing as they would not do if there was an older person placed in charge to keep them busy. At the very beginning of each session, therefore, some one must be found to take the place of each absent teacher.

But even when the teacher is present, disorder sometimes prevails. If so, there is something wanting. The needs of the class are not well met. This deficiency should be discovered by the director and attended to as soon as possible. Sometimes it is remedied by giving the class a more favorable location, thereby protecting it from the disorderly influence of surrounding classes, or by speaking with the teachers about the necessity of good order and the best methods of securing this, or, as a final resort, by placing over the class a teacher who is better qualified. By these and similar means quiet order must be maintained.

*Profitless Interruptions Must Always be Avoided.*—The Sunday-school hour should be sacredly protected from every unnecessary interruption. The distribution of leaflets, pamphlets, and books, as also careless visiting, should be avoided. Visitors are sometimes present. Many of these have nothing to say, or, at any rate, no facility for addressing children. These should not be asked to make senseless speeches. There are a few, however, who have something of importance to tell, and whose remarks would be both entertaining and fruitful. Let the Sunday-school hear them. It is, indeed, a rare privilege which warrants the setting aside of almost every other work. For the director to discriminate most carefully in this matter, however, is a sacred duty. Moreover, while considering the advisability of having others speak, he must not forget himself. If he does, he may thoughtlessly tire the school and waste many precious minutes by vapid talk, or by needless prolixity in making announcements, dwelling at too great length on each item and indulging in useless and tedious repetition.

In many Sunday-schools disorder is caused by some of the children leaving the

room before the close of the session. This is most often found to occur in those classes where the teacher has finished the lesson too soon, and permits the children to sit in idleness with nothing to occupy their attention, restlessly waiting for the close of the session. Each teacher ought so to master the lesson to be taught and to be filled with its truth, that the entire hour is all too short for its discussion. Then the teacher would instruct interestingly unto profit and the children in their eagerness to learn would find the session brief and pleasant. By some means, the teacher must maintain orderly discipline. If he can not or will not do this, then he should be gently but firmly asked to resign his class, and another should be placed in charge of it.

*Unruly Boys and Girls Require Special Treatment.*—Some of these are generally found in every Sunday-school. What is to be done with them? They work great harm by causing disturbance in the class and by lessening, almost destroying, the usefulness of the teacher. They are insubordinate, saucy, and sometimes malicious. The director may often feel inclined to expel them from the Sunday-school and

thus rid himself of this annoyance. This, however, should be the last resort. It is seldom, if ever, necessary. It injures the child and may impel him on to a sinful life. In many cases it has an evil effect on the parents, embittering them against the Sunday-school and the Church. It may cause them to withdraw from the Church entirely and thus to depart from all Christian influence. And yet something must be done. For the child must not be permitted to interfere with the work of the whole class. Tact and judicious handling will generally remedy the trouble, bringing the troublesome one to see the evil of his way. With some children a little punishment, wisely administered by the right party, will have the desired effect of reformation. With others, an iron firmness conquers. With still others, an appeal to honor in a private and prudent interview, will work an entire change. Some boys are made manly and induced to turn back from their downward course by being given some office or responsibility; others are brought under control by being put in another class, away from old associates. If such a class is composed of pupils more advanced in years, they will generally feel

pleased and complimented, while the stronger influence for good wielded over them by these older boys will overcome their old disposition for mischief. There is always some good in such a boy, and often much of it. This must be found and developed. There is always some way to subdue and control him. This must be discovered and tried.

*The Director Must Maintain Self-Government.*—He who does not govern himself can not govern others. Hence self-government is an essential qualification for a Sunday-school director. He must cultivate calmness and self-poise. He should neither lose control of his temper nor show marked signs of irritation. Any habit or weakness which would subject him to adverse and just criticism must be overcome and avoided. He should have an intelligent realization of the Sunday-school's every need, and not unreasonably expect too much from it. The director who is thus self-restrained and wise will have his school well under control, and will find it comparatively easy to preserve all desired order and discipline.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE DIRECTOR TEACHING

*He is Responsible for the Teaching of All.*—The character of a Sunday-school's teaching depends largely on the efforts of the director in charge. He is the one who must assemble the Sunday-school, grade and classify the pupils, appoint the teachers, plan the course of study, and superintend all. Moreover, if not from desire, at least from duty, he must be the teacher of teachers. From this task he should not shrink. It may require both time and thoughtful study; it may occasionally be difficult; but yet it must be done. It often proves far easier, however, than first appearances indicate. For among the teachers of almost every Sunday-school, there are found some who are well qualified. These by suggestion, recommendation, and related experience will encourage and assist the others to improve both in method and work. In this, as also in many other

ways, the director should strive so to stimulate and direct the activity of his helpers as to render the efficiency of each as great as possible for good. In as far as he fails to do this, the Sunday-school will fail in its mission.

*He Must Teach by His Life.*—The life of the director is a living object lesson. It therefore should evidence the fact that he is sincere in his desire for the truth, and faithful in the practice of his religion; that he is laboring as best he can and still depending on God to bless and fructify his endeavors; that he realizes the sacredness of his office, and, inspired by an ardent desire to increase his Christianizing influence over souls, is ever looking for the most practical application of the spiritual lesson taught. In his words, his deeds, and his life, even in his manner, intonation, and unconscious indication of conviction, he is inevitably a teacher of good or evil.

*He is the Presiding Teacher at the Teachers' Meetings.*—An excellent opportunity for him to teach directly is afforded at the teachers' meetings. In the Sunday-school he may not be able, in fact, generally speaking, he ought not attempt to

take charge of a class. Enough for him to do will be found elsewhere. But if he has the ability and can assemble the teachers at some time during the week, much can be accomplished which otherwise would be left undone. If for any reason it is found impossible to hold teachers' meetings each week, at least they should be held occasionally. The director and his teachers should meet at stated times in conference. Past work should be discussed, suggestions offered, new methods adopted, and future work outlined. This will bring the teaching activity of the Sunday-school into unity, infuse into it new and more enthusiastic life, and direct all so that the best possible results will be obtained.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DIRECTOR SUPPLYING AND APPOINTING TEACHERS

*The Supplying of Teachers is an Important Duty.*—It is, in fact, one of the most important duties of the Sunday-school director, and it is, at the same time, one that requires exact judgment and unstinted labor. For very few are the parishes within whose limits is found a sufficient number of teachers who are available, qualified, and willing.

*How May These Teachers be Supplied?*—How is the pastor or director to supply for his Sunday-school the desired number of trained teachers?

1. By an exhortation made from the pulpit. Those qualified should be urged from the pulpit to assist in Sunday-school teaching. In the task of supplying teachers, much can be accomplished by this means. The importance of the Sunday-school should be explained, as should the necessity of having competent teachers to as-

sist by taking charge of the several classes; the dignity and sacredness of the work should be dwelt upon, and the teachers should be made to realize that their self-denying efforts will be appreciated by all and richly rewarded by the One for whom they are made.

2. By personal requests to teach, coming from the director. Ordinarily, the priest knows personally at least the greater number of his parishioners. He is familiar with their points of excellence and also with their limitations. He is competent to judge their qualifications for teaching. Hence in the work of supplying teachers, he should strive to secure those who are most competent; and when it is found necessary, he should not hestitate to invite these individually and personally to assist him.

3. By having a corps of substitute teachers. Besides the regular teachers, the director should have a list of those who can be called upon at any time for substitute work. Some of these may be members of the more advanced classes, especially of the normal class; others may be those persons who find it impossible to attend Sunday-school regularly, but nevertheless are

able and willing to make a special effort to come in case of need. Their willingness should be recognized and their assistance secured. In the larger Sunday-schools, teachers of this class form a corps of workers as important as it is necessary.

4. By training the older pupils in the art of teaching. With the members of the more advanced classes, this is an important duty devolving on the several teachers. As many as possible of the young people should be qualified to graduate from the Sunday-school into the teaching force. A little tact, wisdom, patience, and perseverance will effect this, and thereby perpetuate a continued supply of teachers.

5. By maintaining a normal class. Every large Sunday-school should have connected with it a normal class in which those who are willing to serve as teachers may be trained. Such a class will not only serve to supply qualified teachers for regular class work, but also substitutes required for taking charge for a Sunday or two, when the regular teacher is absent. Even in many of the smaller Sunday-schools, such a class would undoubtedly prove advantageous.

6. By having an installation of teachers. In connection with the commencement exercises of the Sunday-school, the graduates, or at least some of them, should be received into the teaching force by some special installation service. This will tend to impress the teachers, and in fact the entire school, with a sense of the privileges as well as the responsibilities of the Sunday-school teacher's office and work.

*The Director Should Choose His Teachers Wisely.*—It is not enough to have a sufficient number of competent teachers available. It is also necessary to choose the best from those at hand. This the director should do with the greatest care.

*Each Teacher Should be Adapted to His Class.*—In appointing teachers to the various classes, it is vitally important that each teacher should be adapted to the class assigned to his charge. Much depends on this. For a teacher may succeed with one class who would fail utterly with another. Success is always promoted by bringing into united activity two harmonious individualities. There may be a marked difference between them, and yet a mutual fitness may blend their individual endeav-

ors into one. With some classes almost any ordinary teacher will succeed. Of others, this is not true. For example, the kindergarten to be a success must be placed in the charge of a specialist who is expert in kindergarten work. So also the more advanced classes need a teacher of peculiar talent. If such special teachers are not supplied, the members of these classes will soon lose interest in the recitations and decrease in number.

*Day-School Teachers are Most Desirable.*—As a rule the teachers of the day-school prove most efficient helpers in Sunday-school work. They are generally familiar with both the theory and the practice of methodical teaching. They understand youthful human nature, and are skilled in the practice of adaptation, as also in the art of governing. Some of the day-school teachers, however, may feel disinclined to give the desired assistance, pleading the necessity of rest, and arguing that after having taught five days of the week they can not continue the same kind of work on Sunday. While, in the case of some few teachers who are overworked and out of health, this objection is reasonable, it is by no means valid in the case of

the many. Their work is light, they have a long rest on Saturday, and they will be none the worse off for helping in the Sunday-school for an hour or so on Sunday. Hence, whenever it is possible, their assistance should be secured and their talent called into use.

*Sunday-School Teachers Should be Specialists.*—The principle followed by the professors of our normal schools and colleges is this: "In order to develop good teachers, we must not try to have them cover too much ground; we must make them specialists." So in the Sunday-school, let the kindergartner remain a kindergartner, and let the teacher of the Bible class keep at that work. The child should be regularly advanced from one class to another, and from one grade to the next higher, but the teacher should not go with the pupil. He should return to the task of the previous year, and go over the very same work. This will prove of great advantage. Each succeeding year will give him a clearer knowledge of the doctrines taught, a fuller realization of their truth and power, a greater proficiency in the use of right method, and hence an ever-increasing success in Sunday-school endeavor.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE RELATION AND DUTIES OF THE PASTOR TO THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*He is its Chief Officer.*—The pastor of a church is generally the one who should take personal charge of the Sunday-school, and, as superintendent, control and direct its activity. In some places, however, this may be found impossible, or at least disadvantageous. Here an assistant or, if circumstances render it necessary, a competent layman is entrusted with this sacred duty. But even after this appointment has been made, the pastor continues to be the parochial head of the church, and hence the chief parochial officer of this most essential part thereof, the Sunday-school. He has, in fact, as much right to direct Sunday-school endeavor as he has to manage any other department of church work. At the same time, the appointed director has certain personal and delegated rights. These the pastor should carefully ascertain and conscientiously respect. Unless this

is done, little of good will be accomplished by the ones placed in charge. Their work should be definitely assigned, it is true, and general directions given for its accomplishment, but after this has been done, in as far as their competency shows it to be advisable, they should be left to themselves to formulate their own plans, carry them out in their own way, and to act under as little restraint as proves to be advantageous. We expect this treatment from those placed over us; we should accord the same to our subordinates; for their position is like unto ours and their personal rights similar. The pastor, therefore, in dealing with the director whom he has placed in charge of the Sunday-school, should not be arbitrary or despotic, but wisely prudent and harmoniously co-operative. All counsel and assistance given should be such as will tend to increase the Sunday-school's efficiency for good.

*The Pastor Should Promote in Every Way Possible the Work of the Sunday-School.*—This may be effected by various means, among which are the following:

1. He should keep the parish thoroughly interested in the Sunday-school. Unless

he does this, the right relationship will not be maintained between them, and the continued co-operation of the parish, required for making the Sunday-school a success, will not be given. In his announcements he should speak of Sunday-school needs and strive to promote its interests. In his sermons, and especially in his instructions, he should refer to the lessons there taught and to the good therein effected. While making pastoral calls around the parish, he should discuss with the parents the achievements of the Sunday-school, strive to secure the prompt and regular attendance of children, and endeavor to enlist the service of new teachers to replace those who have resigned.

2. The pastor should be the friend and adviser of every teacher. The teacher's work is very similar to his own. In fact, the teacher, while in charge of a class, is laboring with the pastor in a common cause. Moreover, he is performing a part of the pastor's bounden duty. Hence a common interest and a spirit of mutual helpfulness should unite them. The pastor should do all he can to encourage the efforts of his teachers and to increase their efficiency in saving souls. The most fa-

vorable time and place for this is at the teachers' meetings. Here much can be accomplished in the way of instructing the teachers and of directing their activity along the right lines.

3. The pastor should confer with the director whom he has placed in charge. He should discuss with him the success of the Sunday-school and also its failure, and plan with him the best means of increasing its efficiency. The wide experience and special training of the pastor render his suggestions and plans worthy of the most serious consideration; while his point of view, seeing as he does the needs of the whole church and not merely of one department, tends to make his judgment in this matter most weighty.

4. The pastor, even when not director, should assist in the Sunday-school. Although it may be impossible or inadvisable for him to assume the entire charge of the Sunday-school, still this fact by no means releases him from its every responsibility. There remains over and above the proper duties of the director much work and good to be accomplished by him. This he should neither forget nor neglect. He should willingly and gladly give all needed assistance

whenever it is possible for him to do so. Moreover, his presence in the Sunday-school should be a familiar sight welcome to all. Especially in the larger Sunday-schools there is much which he can do. Now he can take temporary charge of one class, and now of another, thereby giving valuable instruction to the different classes, becoming acquainted with the individual pupils, and winning their confidence, their good will, and perhaps even their souls to God. He can move quietly about the school, giving any desired assistance, now to this class and now to that, always taking care, however, that he does not interrupt more useful instruction by interspersing less useful remarks. By his influence and guidance, as well as by his remarks and reviews, he should strive to assist in making the Sunday-school more active and efficient. In this way, he should make manifest to teacher and pupil the kindly, unselfish interest which he feels in their work, so that they will realize ever more and more the fact that he is doing all for their own true welfare.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DUTIES OF PARENTS TO THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*The Parents Must Co-operate with the Sunday-School.*—By far the greater number of our Sunday-school children are living under the paternal roof and subject to paternal control. Hence, if the Sunday-school is to be made a success, the parents must appreciate its importance, use their influence and authority in its behalf, and co-operate heartily in its work.

*Parents Must See That Their Children Attend Regularly and Punctually.*—Not only must the children be sent, but more must be done. The parents must see that they actually attend; and, if necessary, accompany them to the very door of the Sunday-school hall. Occasionally, at least, the parents could even enter and remain with the children. Their presence always gives needed encouragement both to teacher and child. In most cases, however, no great exertion of authority is

needed to secure the desired attendance. A little care and tact is effective. If children are made to realize the necessity and advantage of attending Sunday-school, they are generally willing, if not glad, to be present. In most cases, the chief work required of parents is to make regular attendance convenient and pleasant. Suitable clothing should be provided for the children. Their dress should be, not extravagant, but attractively neat, so they will find pleasure in appearing among others. Their meals should be prepared at suitable hours, and, when necessary, arrangements should be made for their conveyance.

*Parents Should See that Their Children Learn Thoroughly the Lesson Assigned.*— They should supply their children with suitable books, find out each week precisely the lesson which has been given, and, if possible, have a definitely appointed time during which the lesson is studied. Every encouragement and assistance should be afforded. In many cases the parents can and should qualify themselves and teach their children the same lessons which are to be more fully explained in the Sunday-school. This is

a necessary and most important part of the Sunday-school work.

*Parents Should Promote Sunday-School Discipline.*—For obvious reasons it is sometimes impossible to enforce in the Sunday-school the same discipline as that found in the day-school. Improvement, however, in this regard is often to be desired; and the parents can do much, at least indirectly, to assist in effecting it. The authority of those placed over the Sunday-school should be supported in all cases, until its use has been shown to be clearly unjust. Even then less inconvenience and evil will often result from forbearance than from resistance. Moreover, any child found guilty of misconduct in the Sunday-school should be censured, and, if needs be, punished at home.

*Parents Should Avoid Criticising the Sunday-School Adversely.*—They should regard the Sunday-school in its true light, as a department of Christ's Church, and its work as a continuance of His mission. Never in the presence of their children should they be heard criticising either the director, or the teachers, or the Sunday-school itself. Seldom is it realized how great an influence the conversation of par-

ents wields over the lives of their children. The words are listened to and pondered. Even the tone of voice is noted and instinctively understood. The seed sinks deep into the heart, and in time bears fruit of good or evil. Slighting and adversely critical remarks coming from parents always tend to destroy the child's respect for the teacher and to lessen the teacher's influence for good over the child. If adverse criticism seems necessary, let the parent be manly about it, and going personally to the director or teacher present his complaint or grievance. When this is done, a satisfactory agreement is generally arrived at. No misunderstanding should be permitted to exist between the home and the Sunday-school. For the zealous efforts of both, working as one, are required to save the child from sin and eternal ruin by enlightening its mind, ennobling its heart, Christianizing its endeavor, and leading it on through a virtuous life into heaven unto God.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE SUBORDINATE OFFICERS OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*How Many Officers Are Required?*—The number of officers needed in a Sunday-school depends almost entirely on its size and organization. In the larger and better organized schools it has been found advantageous to have an assistant director, secretary, treasurer, and librarian. In schools which are smaller, the same person may easily fill two or more of these offices. In a word, the number required is such as will render the efficiency of each Sunday-school as great as possible for good.

*Duties of the Assistant Director.*—As the name implies, the one who is entrusted with this office should assist the director by performing under his supervision all work assigned. In as far as it is found possible and advantageous, however, he should have certain definite duties of his own. To him could be allotted the

work of supplying teachers to these classes whose regular teachers are absent, of assisting in a general way to maintain discipline, of teaching for a short time now this class and now that, and of taking charge of the Sunday-school whenever the director is absent.

*Duties of the Secretary.*—The secretary should have charge of all Sunday-school records and reports. If these are kept on file from month to month and from year to year, they will prove to be most interesting, helpful, and also valuable for reference. The secretary should also keep in systematic order a complete catalogue of teachers and pupils. This may be done by means of a book specially prepared for that purpose, or else by means of the card system. A card may be allotted to each member of the school on which is written all desired information. These cards should be kept on file for reference. This system to be complete should employ three sets of cards, one alphabetic, one made out according to the streets, and one according to the teachers having charge of the several pupils. The last two may be very brief and serve simply as indices to the first, which should contain all essential

points of information. When desired, the secretary may also prepare weekly or monthly reports, and send out notices to those who have been absent, or better, to their parents. This would help immeasurably in securing promptness and regularity of attendance.

*Duties of the Treasurer.*—The treasurer should keep an accurate account of the Sunday-school's financial income and expenditure. Ordinarily the pastor remains in charge of this work.

*Duties of the Librarian.*—A library of well-selected Catholic books is or should be placed at the disposal of almost every Sunday-school. The librarian should have charge of this, should take proper care of the books, and should see that these are invariably, even regularly returned.

*Who Should be Selected to Fill These Offices?*—In many parishes young ladies or women are entrusted with all these various duties. Experience, however, clearly shows that they are performed as well and generally better by men; that is, when the right men are chosen and when the right places are assigned to them individually. But irrespective of sex or age, the persons appointed to these offices should be the

most reliable and the most competent ones available.

*Except in Small Sunday-Schools Subordinate Officers are a Necessity.*—In the larger Sunday-schools, at least some officers should be had to assist the director in the performance of his manifold duties. For these are certainly far too numerous to be performed properly by any one person. Those who culpably believe otherwise, and who persist in dispensing with all help, fail in many things and leave much undone. Such persons may justly be accused of voluntarily refusing to prevent the eternal loss of immortal souls, and will be held responsible for the same before the throne of divine judgment.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND CHURCH SOCIETIES

*Church Societies are a Great Aid to Sunday-School Work.*—The pastor's sole endeavor is so to instruct and guide the members of his parish that each will live a Christian life and gain salvation. His one purpose is to keep the greatest possible number of parishioners under the influence and control of the Church. Those who are most successful concur in saying that it is difficult to accomplish this without thorough and efficient organization. The members of a parish must be marshalled into line as soldiers in an army, with the pastor as general, commanding all according to the will of God. This organization is best effected by the aid of societies. In most of our modern up-to-date parishes societies adapted to each class of parishioners are found thoroughly organized. Thus in some churches, the boys have a junior branch of the Holy Name Society

from which at a certain age they pass into the senior branch, which is organized for all the men of the parish. As to the girls, as soon as they have received their first holy communion, they are enrolled in the Holy Angels' Sodality. From this at a specified age they are admitted into the St. Agnes' Sodality, and later into that of the Children of Mary. The married women of the parish are members of the Rosary Society.

In this way the parishioners are organized into societies, banded together for assisting in Church work, brought into friendly acquaintanceship at their meetings, and influenced to approach in a body for the frequent reception of the sacraments.

In the formation of the various Church societies, whatever their names may be, it will be found that they are largely the outgrowth of Sunday-school endeavor. If the children are rightly educated in the Sunday-school, they find it easy and pleasant to enter the various societies organized for their spiritual benefit, and at least a great number of them are found to persevere in the strict observance of prescribed rules. As a result, it becomes pos-

sible to bring the people of the parish together, not only for social entertainment, but also for religious instruction and devotion. Then, too, these societies afford the pastor an opportunity of meeting in social session the members of his parish, of exerting over them a personal influence for good, of fostering a more loyal and self-sacrificing adherence to the Church, and of securing a more faithful attendance of both teacher and pupil at Sunday-school. In a word, it is found that these societies tend to make the parish join as an organized body in the work of personal salvation, of parish support, and especially of the religious education of Christ's little ones. The better a parish is organized into societies, the more thoroughly efficient its Sunday-school is found to be.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL EDUCATING CHURCH WORKERS

*The Children Should be Taught to Support the Church.*—The Sunday-school pupils of to-day will be the parishioners of the near future. Church work will then have to be done and Church expenses defrayed even as now. The children must be trained for this; for if the spirit of self-sacrifice is not now developed in their hearts, it will be found difficult in later years to break through the habit of neglect and selfishness and to induce them to part with their hard-earned wages even for the sake of Christ's holy cause. Each child, therefore, should be carefully trained to do his part in working for the Church and in defraying its necessary expense. This is an important, a vital part of his religious education, and the Sunday-school that fails not only to teach this lesson, but also to influence the children to adopt its practice, should be censured for neglecting to per-

form one of its most sacred duties. The children should be brought to realize that even as others are now defraying the expense entailed by the work of saving their souls, so they in the course of time will be obliged by duty to assist in defraying the expense of saving the souls of others who will be unable, or perhaps unwilling, to bear the cost of their own salvation. If future generations are negligent in laboring and sacrificing for this cause, then as a result at least some immortal souls will be lost, and this eternal loss will be justly attributed to the defective training imparted in our present Sunday-school. Hence the salvation of future generations depends in no small measure on the present training of our children.

It is true the child's ability to help in Church work is limited, and its means of giving is almost insignificant, still its assistance should be encouraged and gratefully accepted as being the best offering that can be given, and therefore one most precious in the sight of God.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENTS

*Occasional Sunday-School Entertainments Are Useful.*—They are, in fact, almost a necessity. Young people need relaxation and enjoyment. Their memories of the Sunday-school should be pleasant and delightful. They should at times be convened for social pleasure, to become acquainted with one another, and to have their thoughts and desires blended into friendly union. An occasional entertainment is at once an opportunity and a means for accomplishing this. If properly conducted, they foster and maintain a spirit of friendly good-will among the pupils and lively enthusiasm for the school. They serve to advertise this and to attract children into its classes. Hence they are not only a source of pleasure, but also of great helpfulness.

*Too Much Entertainment in the Sunday-School is Dangerous.*—It develops in the

children a too great desire for amusement, impedes the regular Sunday-school work, and tends to demoralize rather than to build up. It attracts the attention of both teacher and pupil away from God. The needs of the soul are forgotten, and the school is changed into a mere social club, whose chief purpose is to amuse for the moment. Under no consideration should these entertainments be allowed to interfere with the religious work or the spiritual life of the school. At them all that is coarse and ill-timed should be avoided, and especially all that has even the appearance of wrong. At Christmas time, the Sunday-school should have an entertainment by all means, but it should be had in celebrating a Christmas in which Christ is the central figure and thought. A few well-chosen remarks from the pastor, a few choice tableaux representing Christmas scenes, Christmas carols sweetly sung by the children, and presents given out in a kindly manner, will touch the heart and prove helpful without lessening the pleasure of the occasion.

*Educational Entertainments Are Becoming Ever More Popular.*—These by blending pleasure and instruction appeal

to both teacher and child. Sometimes a stereopticon is used and found valuable. By means of it, there can be pictured before the children views from the life of Christ, scenes from the Bible, from Church History, and from many other subjects which if explained by appropriate remarks will prove of vital interest and helpfulness to all. Music can be introduced, as also songs, hymns, elocutionary readings, and declamations. Occasional entertainments of this sort will give a pleasing variety to Sunday-school work, and will serve to attract and instruct many who otherwise would perhaps never come under the influence of the Christian religion.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND TEMPERANCE WORK

*Temperance Should be Taught in the Sunday-School.*—The word temperance in its broadest and truest sense signifies a proper rational self-control in the use of God's creatures. By some, however, it is employed almost exclusively to express the right use of intoxicants. Temperance in all things, but especially in this, is one of life's fundamental duties. Hence the Sunday-school is strictly obliged both to teach its principles and to inculcate its practice.

*The Sunday-School Should Represent Temperance as a Moral Duty.*—The purpose of the Sunday-school is to teach, at least in outline, all the doctrines of Christianity and all those duties of life which are found either in the revealed Word of God or in the natural law. Of these doctrines and duties it should omit none that are prominent or important.

That temperance is a duty which is

taught plainly and repeatedly in the Word of God and which has been inculcated from the beginning by the Church, no one can truthfully deny. It is taught by the doctrine that the human body is the living temple of the Holy Ghost to be kept clean and sanctified for His indwelling. It is taught in the great fundamental doctrine, that God, the Creator and sovereign Lord of all, commands us to keep ourselves under proper control and to rule according to right reason our every desire and passion. In the Scriptures, temperance is taught repeatedly and forcibly by means of graphically pictured events which vividly illustrate both the evils arising from over-indulgence and the manifold benefits derived from due abstinence. So numerous are these examples and so evidently do they manifest the divine will that it is impossible for the Sunday-school to teach His commandments faithfully without at the same time representing temperance as a moral duty sacred in the sight of man and God.

*The Sunday-School Must Warn its Pupils against the Evils of Intemperance.*—It would be false to its trust received from on High, unworthy of its profession as teacher

of righteousness, and fail in its work of properly training the youth, if it did not strive to impress on the mind and heart of each child a right idea in regard to the evil of all intemperance, but especially in regard to that of drunkenness. Christianity has practically overcome and vanquished one after another a great variety of evils; as for instance, the Vendetta, trial by torture, duelling, polygamy, slavery and the like. Intemperance in the use of intoxicants has to some extent been checked, but in many places it still is prevalent and even popular. That it works great evil and causes dire misery no one will deny. It ruins the home, making the existence of the wife and the mother wretched and at times unendurable. It debauches the youth, and directly or indirectly destroys his prospects of life and his virtue. It debases our men and allures them down to the level of the brute. It causes many a Catholic to become a traitor to his religion and his God by a scandalous life. One-fourth of the insanity and three-fourths of the crime and pauperism found in our land has been attributed to its influence and effects. Directly or indirectly, it has increased enormously the expense of court and jail.

Worst of all, it has seduced, and is seducing thousands, even millions into the drunkards' hell. Surely it requires no argument to show that a monstrous vice such as this should receive due attention in the Sunday-school, and that the young should be thoroughly warned against its baneful power.

*The Sunday-School Must Advance a Safeguard against the Evil of Intemperance.*—The chief remedy for drunkenness is not to be found in the civil law, but in Christian morality maintained by divine grace. The child must be educated to realize that by yielding to the allurements of intemperance he lessens his chance of success, increases his misfortune, degrades his manliness, offends his God, and risks his eternal salvation. More than this, he must be so influenced by these or nobler motives, as also by the grace of God, that he will strive as best he can to avoid not only intoxication but also at least its proximate occasions. This is just the defence against drunkenness which the Church of Christ is furnishing. No other organization or power is so well fitted to educate the young in this duty, and to build around them a wall of moral conviction high

enough and strong enough to save them from drink's allurement and captivity.

*The Sunday-School Must Overcome this Evil Largely by Prevention.*—The Church tries as best she can, but often it is most difficult, at times seemingly impossible, to reform the confirmed drunkard. Death alone seems able to end his career of sin. No sooner is one drunkard dead, however, than another appears from the ranks of the young to take his place. Thus from year to year, the total number of drunkards continues about the same. Hence, as has so often been said, if some remedy were found to prevent the young from joining the ranks of older and confirmed drunkards, the supply of new recruits would be cut off, and in the course of a generation or two this evil would be practically destroyed. None will deny that prevention is not only the surest method of stamping out this evil, but that it is also the easiest and the best; it is also the one which accomplishes the most in reforming those already enslaved by drink. The great work of the Church, therefore, is so to instruct and train the youth, and so to surround them with good influence that even the children of drunkards will grow

up hostile to the abuse of intoxicants. Often the conviction thus developed is found to be so deep and intense that these children even to their dying day experience no desire or appetite for intoxicating drink, in fact, are nauseated against its use.

*How Should the Sunday-School Teach Temperance?*—Many occasions will present themselves in the Sunday-school for speaking of temperance and emphasizing its benefits. The teachers can judiciously and sedulously inculcate its principles. The director or pastor can at times make it a special topic when addressing the entire school assembled. Moreover, temperance work can be made a feature of some, or, if found desirable, of all, the church societies and sodalities; or a special temperance society can be organized. This society could be broad enough to include in its membership all desirable persons. Its aim and purpose should be to promote a temperance sentiment, to keep the subject alive before the people, and to influence and strengthen the endeavor of all who are laboring for the extermination of drunkenness. Its main effort should be preventive. Total abstinence should be practised by all members who are less than twenty-

one years of age, as also by those who find that the use of intoxicants means for them abuse. As to the others, if for the sake of giving good example and encouragement to those less strong, they voluntarily desire to take the pledge, permission should be given to do so. All members should at least practice due temperance.

*The Pledge is a Power for Good.*—In such a society the chief method in vogue is that of taking the pledge. Hence the society's great work is to sign these pledges and to keep them unbroken. This should also be a special work of the Sunday-school. A book containing suitable pledges should be kept and the children, after they have arrived at a certain age, should be induced to sign them. Before being permitted to do this, however, it should be known with moral certainty that they understand what they are doing, that they are acting freely, and that they sincerely intend to keep the pledge as signed. In many parishes a most commendable practice prevails; all the children are influenced to take the pledge on the day of their first holy communion, or of Confirmation. When this is done a pledge card should be duly signed by each child and preserved

by him as a remembrance and souvenir.

*Right Views on Temperance Should be Set Forth in the Sunday-School.*—Extreme views should be sedulously avoided as harmful and ruinous to the cause. Hence those in charge of the Sunday-school, if their ideas are either too rigorous or too lax on the subject of temperance, should set themselves aright, and then by word and by life leave nothing possible undone to train and instruct the several pupils, so that each will practise temperance not only in regard to the use of intoxicating drinks, but also in regard to all the labors and desires and pleasures of life.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE BEST TIME FOR SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*This Depends Largely on Circumstances.*—The question as to the best time for holding Sunday-school can not be answered without serious consideration. It depends almost entirely on the particular needs and conditions of each school and church. The Sunday-school session must be held at a time when it will not interfere with Church services, when it will be easiest to secure the regular attendance of teachers and pupils, and when all are favorably disposed for doing their best work.

*In Theory, the Morning is Preferable.*—Theoretically speaking, the best time for holding Sunday-school is during the early morning hour. The teachers who attend the morning Mass will then find it easy to be present; and the children will be in their freshest, brightest, and most thoughtful mood.

*In Practice, the Afternoon is Found More Favorable.*—The director of the school is generally the pastor or one of his assistants. Ordinarily, he has quite enough to attend to on Sunday morning without being burdened with extra work, especially since he is generally fasting at least during a greater part of the morning. Moreover, some of the teachers find it inconvenient, and often impossible, to attend the particular Mass before which or after which the Sunday-school is held. Then too, when this is held before the children's Mass, it is found that many of them are tardy; and when it is held after the Mass, the time is too limited and the children too fatigued for satisfactory work. Finally, in many homes the children must go to one Mass and the parents to another. Consequently, when the children are compelled to attend Sunday-school, the parents find it impossible to assist at Mass. In a word, it is generally found that holding Sunday-school in the morning overtaxes the strength of priest, teacher, and child.

There are, in fact, many reasons why it is better to divide the work of the day so that a part can be done in the morning and

the rest in the afternoon. This causes the entire day to be observed as holy, and gives many children, who otherwise would be running wild, a place to go and something to do, thereby keeping them away from evil associates and under the influence of good. Those who were tired after the morning service are now rested and refreshed and prepared for the class work. As a result the Sunday-school has an attendance and a power which would otherwise be wanting.

Even in those parishes where there is a parochial school, the best results are secured by having the children learn and recite during the week the lesson assigned and explained on Sunday afternoon.

*Different Classes May be Held at Different Hours.*—Under some conditions, it has been found advantageous, even necessary, to assemble the different classes of the Sunday-school at different times. In parishes where many of the children live in the country and at a considerable distance from the church, they often find it practically impossible to walk or drive back again for Sunday-school. Still these children need religious instruction and should have it. This can be given by hav-

ing a class organized for their special benefit and held immediately before or after one of the morning Masses. In this way, the pastor should so arrange the time for holding Sunday-school that ample opportunity will be given to every child of the parish for becoming familiar with the truth of God, with the means of salvation, and with the joy and glory which will reward his faithfulness in heaven.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT

*The Kindergarten is Desirable and Necessary.*—Even in a smaller Sunday-school, the kindergarten is most desirable, provided there are enough children who can not read to be gathered into it. In the larger schools it is a necessity. Very young children can not be taught by ordinary methods. Where this is attempted, they soon lose all interest and cease to attend. With them a special plan is pursued. They are gathered by themselves, and taught by kindergarten methods. This introduction of kindergarten work into the Sunday-school is undoubtedly effecting great good. It is attracting the younger children and training them into regular attendance at Sunday-school. It is instructing and preparing them for better work in the more advanced classes. There are to-day many excellent Catholics who never would have attended Sunday-

school had it not been for the attraction of the kindergarten over their infant lives. They came. They saw the truth. They learned to love it. They remained loyal to its command.

*How Many Classes Should There be in the Kindergarten?*—An important question in regard to the kindergarten department is whether it should be conducted as one large class with one teacher, or should it be divided into several classes. The answer varies with circumstances; but generally it is found best to separate these little ones into two classes, one for the boys and one for the girls. Excepting in very large schools, no further division is ordinarily made.

*Large Classes are Preferable.*—There are many reasons why this is true:

1. Skilled kindergarten teachers are rare. Few, indeed, are the persons endowed with sufficient natural ability to enable them to teach very small children without any previous schooling in kindergarten methods; and, as to kindergarten methods, few are sufficiently familiar with them to teach properly on their basis. The school that is fortunate enough to secure a trained kindergartner or a genius

in educating little children, should utilize his gifts to the utmost and place all children possible under his sole charge.

2. The little ones must be kept moving. They are restless and full of animal vivacity. As soon as they become tired sitting, they must be moved about to relieve the nervous strain, and to regain their attention. To do this most advantageously they should be in one large room and under the care of one person who can direct all in unity.

3. Each room should be fully equipped with lesson helps. These children are to be taught largely by object lessons; that is, by the aid of pictures, maps, charts, tables, blocks, and the like. A teacher can use these even more successfully with a large class than with a small one, and thereby lessen expense and increase efficiency.

Even in very large schools, great success has been achieved in kindergarten work by dividing the very young children into two classes and placing each in a large, well-equipped room under the charge of an efficient kindergarten teacher.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

*In This Department the Classes Should be Small.*—After the children have graduated from the kindergarten, they require more personal attention. This can best be given where the classes are small. The teacher of a small class will generally secure a more regular attendance and will instruct each pupil more thoroughly. Being a personal friend to each, he will teach as much by example as by word.

Then, too, better order will be maintained. When the little children first enter the kindergarten, they are awed by the novelty of the surroundings and full of curiosity. But after three or four years of experience in the school, they lose that feeling of restraint and at the same time become more self-willed and playful. Consequently they are less inclined to observe strict order. With these, small classes become a necessity. When the teacher has

each pupil under his eye and immediately before him, better discipline can be maintained and more efficient work accomplished.

*Each Pupil Should be Rightly Classified.*—This requires keen discernment, accurate judgment, and absolute impartiality. While doing this, no respect of person and no consideration of social position or personal attraction should be shown. Pupils of about the same age who are doing the same work and preparing for the same sacraments should be placed in the same class. The children should be early taught the lesson of equality before God in all things save moral excellence, and that often those who are most despised by the world are greatest in His sight.

*The Classes Must be Separated One from Another.*—In arranging the various classes, care must be taken not to place them so near together that they will disturb one another. It would be a great blessing if a separate class-room could be had for each. The teacher's efficiency for good would thereby be increased many fold.

*The Pupils Must be Induced to Attend Regularly.*—The greatest possible care and

effort should be given to secure a regular attendance in this department. It is absolutely necessary for success.

*The Pupils Must be Made to Learn Well the Lesson Assigned.*—A short but definite lesson should be given at each session. Every child should memorize and learn this thoroughly before entering the classroom for recitation. This is most important. It should be insisted on at every session and in the case of every child. It should be demanded absolutely, and in some way secured, or else failure will result. Especially is this true when the children are preparing for confession, for first holy communion, and for Confirmation.

## CHAPTER XXI

### HOW TO KEEP THE OLDER BOYS IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*Our Sunday-School is not Succeeding in This.*—There is one respect in which our Sunday-school is liable to fail, and, as a matter of fact, for some reason is failing in its mission. It is failing to keep the older boys under its instruction and influence.

*The Result of This Failure is Fatal and Eternal.*—At the present time nearly all our boys are leaving the Sunday-school at a comparatively young age. The greater number of them do not, even at the time of leaving, know the little catechism word for word; perhaps they have never memorized it. As to its doctrines, they have in their mind no clear outline of Catholic truth, and no definite idea of their moral obligations in life. In other words, they do not realize as Catholics what they are supposed to know, neither do they understand just what they must do in order to

be saved. Soon after leaving the Sunday-school they become forgetful of religion and negligent about its practice. Moreover, they leave just at the most critical period of life, at the very time when they start forth into the world to mingle with every class and creed. It is then that home influence grows less, ties of companionship are strongest, love of pleasure is most intense, sinfulness is novel, vice is most alluring, and temptation strongest. These boys are then launched forth into the current of the world's pleasure and excitement. Falsehood arrayed in angelic vesture greets them at every turn. Unless their way is illumined by the light of truth and unless the grace of God sustains and guides them on, they will inevitably cast religion aside and abandon themselves to sin. When these boys, however, are kept faithful to the teachings of an efficient Sunday-school, instead of forgetting the doctrines of their holy religion, they learn to know and appreciate them better daily, and instead of being lured away from duty by sinful influence, they continue steadfast in the right, strong in manly virtue, and remain so even until that most trying period of life is past, until they have

learned to know, to judge, and to value the world at its true worth, until their character and habits are permanently formed, until they have grown into men—into Catholic men of the truest and noblest type.

Again we are forced to assert, that at present the vast majority of the older boys are not kept in the Sunday-school. As a result, little by little they are being alienated from the Church, and are growing careless about prayer, Mass, and the sacraments, as also about bad company and temptation, sin, and vice. Many of them, in fact, millions of them in the world today are drifting, perhaps unobservedly, yet surely, from the Church into ruin. Still these youths are to be the men of the future, the fathers of future generations. If they are lost to the Church and God, their children will share in their ruin and punishment. If they can be saved to the Church, however, much good will be accomplished. For their influence will, directly or indirectly, cause millions of others to live Catholic lives and gain salvation. Hence this neglect on the part of the Sunday-school, if perceived in its true light by those in charge and if voluntary,

is criminal, and the blood of every soul which it causes to be lost will cry to Heaven for revenge against those who are responsible.

*It is Difficult to Secure the Return of Boys Who Have Left the Sunday-School.*—There are so many attractions nowadays in the form of baseball, football, games, amusements, and excursions, that it is no easy matter to keep even those older boys who still continue as members of the Sunday-school in regular attendance. After they have left this, however, and grown accustomed to having the entire afternoon for their own pleasure, it is far more difficult, and in some cases impossible, to induce them to return. To effect this requires both reason and influence, persuasion and tact. These older boys and especially their parents must be brought to realize and appreciate the advantage and need of continued Sunday-school attendance.

*Most of These Older Boys Can be Induced to Return.*—A variety of means have been tried and found helpful in effecting this. Sometimes the boys of the parish are thoroughly organized into a society of their own. Special inducements are of-

fered to get them into the society, and special attractions to keep them there. Then by reasoning, persuasion, and tact, they are influenced to return to the Sunday-school and to attend regularly. A personal invitation or command will be effective with some, perhaps with many. The best means to be employed, however, will depend largely on individual cases and circumstances.

*How Are the Older Boys to be Kept in the Sunday-School?*—The only way to maintain a large class of these older boys in the Sunday-school is to induce those who are still in attendance to remain, and at the same time, by all means possible, to persuade those who have left to return. To effect this, certain things must be done and certain inducements offered.

1. Thoroughly competent teachers must be secured for them. These boys can not be induced to return, or even to remain in the Sunday-school unless there is placed in charge of their class a teacher pre-eminently qualified, for whom they have the greatest respect, in whom they repose absolute confidence, and from whom they learn much that is pleasing and useful. The success of such a class ordinarily de-

pends to a great extent on the teacher. His personality must tend to attract, retain, and transform the individual pupils. He must awaken their interest, encourage their efforts, foster a congenial friendship among them, and strive so to conduct the class that its members shall voluntarily, even gladly, be present. The teacher of such a class must have a strong and attractive character. He must be the master of the subject he would teach, possessed of marked ability for teaching, and embody in his own life the principles professed. His rule must be firm, by all means, yet kind; and his manner of teaching vivid, interesting, and fruitful. More than this, to be successful, he must understand these older boys, be in sympathy with them, be attached to them with an unselfish affection, and he must so make evident this kindly, generous interest that all will be convinced of its sincerity.

2. Due respect must be shown to them. These older boys, almost grown to young men, are living in the world and familiar with popular current opinions. They have their own sentiments and ideas about many things. These should be discovered and respected. A teacher can often learn

much that is prudent, wise, and helpful, by consulting the members of his class. We who are in charge sometimes fail to remember that these boys are approaching the age of maturity, and that concerning many things they are perhaps better informed and more up to date than we. An appeal to their knowledge as well as to their manly courage and generosity will sometimes result in much that is good and helpful. If you treat them as little children, they naturally resent it. On the other hand, it is by no means safe to follow their counsel and desire in all things. When something which directly affects their welfare is to be done, and when it is deemed advisable, their opinions should be heard and their wishes consulted. Then, after considering all things impartially, the teacher should do that which seems to be for the best; and it will not be difficult tactfully to convince the class that this course is wisest. Each idea, no matter from what source it may come, should be acknowledged at its true worth. The teacher stands before the class as an impartial judge openly deciding between the value of his own opinions and those of his pupils. At times he may have to confess

the superior knowledge and wisdom of others. Suppose he does? Really great men are too strong to conceal their own weakness. Proficient teachers acknowledge even their own limitations whenever occasion demands; and yet they remain none the less masters of their class, quietly, yet absolutely ruling all by the power of their will and intellect.

3. They should be made useful. In as far as it is possible and of advantage, the older boys should be made to feel that they are helpers in the school and in a way responsible for its success. Let them feel that their presence and example are appreciated as being beneficial to the school at large and encouraging to the director. The older members of such a class can be used in many ways; as for secretary, work in the library, in the choir, at the service, or as ushers. Whenever they are assured that they are really of use and that their usefulness is appreciated, they seem pleased and glad to continue their assistance.

4. They should receive instruction of real value. Many of these boys are attending secular schools where the best of teachers are employed, the most useful

matter taught, the most approved systems followed, and orderly discipline maintained. They enter the Sunday-school hall, however, and sometimes find that the teachers, the methods, and helps are manifestly inferior. They mark this, as is only natural. The result is prejudicial to the Sunday-school. How can this be remedied? By furnishing them with a suitable room, well equipped, placing them in charge of an able teacher, trained and efficient, who will devote both time and thought to his work, and giving them class matter which is manifestly of the greatest utility. This matter should be new, and not a mere repetition of previous work. Each year they desire and should have a new line of study, more thorough and comprehensive in every way. A regular curriculum of studies should therefore be provided, in which this special work for the advanced classes is adequately and judiciously outlined.

5. Their questions should be heard and answered. These advanced pupils should be encouraged not only to pursue a personal study of the various subjects, but also to seek, even in the class-room, a fuller explanation and knowledge. When ques-

tions are asked in good faith, it is wrong for the teacher or director to become impatient, and to return a cutting or insulting answer. This does great harm to the pupils. It lowers their estimation of the one who treats them thus, lessens their esteem for the class, also their interest in the work, and sometimes it causes them to become disgusted and cease altogether from attendance.

6. The instruction given them should be practical. These young people stand on the threshold of a future, great, unknown, and most interesting. Life with all its mysteries lies before them. They are eager to learn the bearing of truth on their daily duties. This is only right and reasonable. They care little as to the general and universal achievements of Christianity. What they most desire to know is its practical and personal application to business, to social relations, to pleasure, and to their own lives. If they are to be kept in the Sunday-school, it must be made to light up their future, to guide their way, and to assist them on to success, temporal and eternal.

7. They must realize that the Sunday-school is not solely for little children.

Classes of young men and older boys grow restless and decrease in number when they are constantly being addressed as "dear little children," and forced to listen to baby talk Sunday after Sunday. In fact they should be made to feel that the Sunday-school is maintained for them, even more than for those of the lower grades.

*Parents Must be Made to See That These Older Boys Attend.*—After all, the priest or director can accomplish little in securing the attendance of these older boys unless he is seconded by the hearty and persistent co-operation of the parents. It is of supreme necessity, therefore, that the parents in some way be brought to realize the advantage and necessity of having their boys continue in Sunday-school; and also that they be influenced to leave nothing possible undone to secure their prompt and regular attendance. It is only when the parents are faithful in doing their part and when the Sunday-school itself in all its departments is properly organized, equipped, and conducted, that success certain and complete is made sure.

## CHAPTER XXII

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS' MEETINGS

*Many Sunday-School Teachers Are Incompetent.*—It is to be regretted that a sufficient number of qualified teachers are not to be had by every Sunday-school. Generally the pastor or director is forced by necessity to secure for assisting in Sunday-school work those parishioners who seem most competent and willing. These he places in charge of such classes as he deems them best qualified individually for teaching. The teachers willingly accept the task assigned, and perform it as best they can. The director superintends the entire school and does all in his power. The best conceivable use is made of the material at hand, but the inferiority of this material is often but too evident. Go into many of our Sunday-schools, especially where many classes are crowded into one room or hall; listen to the incessant hum, the Babylon of articulate sound; teachers

can scarcely hear the voices of their pupils; pupils only with greatest difficulty can make out what the teachers are saying. While the lesson of one pupil is being heard, many if not all the other children of the class are inattentive, thinking of anything, and perhaps of almost everything except the instruction given. They are restless, playful, mischievous, and even unruly. Note the attitude; disorder reigns. Listen for a moment to the teacher's explanation. Too often it is manifest that he has no mastery of the subject, does not understand it himself, and hence is unable to teach its truth to others. Observe his methods. Practically he has none. From appearances, one would think he were convinced that his sole duty was to find out whether or not the pupils had memorized word for word the text of the catechism. If they have memorized the text, little good is accomplished by mere questioning. If they have not done so, as very frequently happens, less is effected. The result is that, for by far the greater number of these pupils, almost the entire recitation hour is squandered, and comparatively little is accomplished. Such a Sunday-school is inefficient. It is in fact a

veritable farce. All this comes from various causes, and to be remedied requires a corresponding variety of improvements. Rooms better adapted and equipped for Sunday-school work must be supplied; the Sunday-school itself must be better organized and classified; and teachers, competent, educated, and trained for the work, must be secured. If this is not done, our children will not be properly educated in their religion, and as a result very many of them will not save their souls. This inefficiency, in as far as it can be done, must by all means be remedied; and the greatest possible number of these children who are now drifting downward into hell must be brought back and led into heaven. In most cases this can be done. Suitable rooms can ordinarily be furnished; the school can be thoroughly organized; and competent teachers, instructed and trained, can generally in some way be secured.

*For Supplying Competent Teachers, Teachers' Meetings Are Almost a Necessity.*—The teachers are qualified, at least in part, for their work by means of teachers' meetings, held whenever possible each week, and at a time when the greatest num-

ber of teachers find it convenient to attend. The good accomplished at these meetings is almost unlimited.

1. They bring the teachers into social unity. Unquestionably, the teachers of a Sunday-school should become acquainted with one another as friends joined in harmonious unity for the accomplishment of a common work. Conferences should be held, methods considered, and experiences related. A teacher is stronger and more efficient for knowing better the difficulties encountered by others, as also the success achieved. An opportunity for this is afforded by the weekly teachers' meetings. The pastor or director in charge of the school is at least present. The teachers sit about informally with note books. The meetings to be successful must be free from unnecessary restraint. After the opening prayer has been said, it often proves advantageous to induce some of the most experienced teachers to report on the condition of their respective classes, and also to tell of new methods and achievements. Questions should be asked and information sought on points of difficulty or perplexity. The pastor or one presiding receives these reports, comments on them as

seems profitable, sees that the explanation desired is properly given, and that the questions asked are rightly answered. In this way, the meetings unite the teachers not only socially, but also intellectually and spiritually, and direct the endeavor of all to the accomplishment of one great work.

2. These meetings foster and increase devotion. At their sessions, various prayers and devotional practices are discussed, as also the worthy reception of the sacraments. The teachers report as to what prayers their pupils actually say and as to what devotions they practise. Thus director and teachers are brought to labor as one in the work of having the children learn the best prayers, say these regularly, practise the most approved devotions, and receive the sacraments often and worthily. This tends to unify the religious endeavor of the Sunday-school and to make it an irresistible power for effecting spiritual good.

3. At these meetings, Sunday-school business can be transacted. The financial transactions of a Sunday-school are generally rare and limited. Still there should be some, and at times it is well to bring

these before the teachers for consideration. This can easily and quickly be done at the meetings.

4. They afford an opportunity for preparing class matter. A teacher to be efficient in Sunday-school work must first understand the lesson to be taught, and then be familiar with the best methods of imparting this knowledge to others. How may this efficiency be secured? If the lessons taught in the Sunday-school were so graded that on the same Sunday the same lesson or doctrine would be assigned by all the teachers to their respective classes, then at the weekly teachers' meetings this one subject, or doctrine, could be taken up by the director and teachers, carefully considered and thoroughly explained. The best examples and stories for illustrating this could be given, and the best methods for teaching it discussed. At least the greater number of teachers, after being present at such a meeting and completing the study at home, would be fairly well qualified for the work of teaching on the following Sunday.

*Who Should Preside at These Meetings?* —In many, if not most parishes the pastor

is able and willing to assume the office of Sunday-school director. Sometimes an assistant is assigned to this position, and occasionally a layman. Whether the director be pastor, assistant, or layman, he should by all means be present at these teachers' meetings; and whether he presides thereat or not, he should always be shown every mark of respect and attention. As to presiding, however, it is found almost absolutely necessary to have one of the parish priests in charge, because it is most difficult for any person to conduct these meetings successfully and to secure a regular attendance unless he has pursued a special course both in theology and in the methods of teaching.

*The Chief Purpose of These Meetings is Method Study.*—A teachers' meeting held merely to study the lesson will prove dull and comparatively fruitless. The one great endeavor should be to qualify the teachers not only for teaching but for teaching the exact lesson which has been assigned for the following Sunday. Various methods are employed for accomplishing this. The following has ordinarily been found most successful.

Get the truth of the lesson, definite and clear cut. What is the doctrine to be taught?

Make such an analysis of the lesson as will cause its truth to appear before the mind as one comprehensive picture.

Find out the lesson's great central truth, and then the relation which its other truths bear to this.

Explain those difficulties which are most likely to arise in the pupil's mind.

Give a few of those illustrations or stories which will best picture forth the truths taught.

If a blackboard is available for class work, show how this may best be used.

Discuss the best methods for teaching the lesson, first in general, and then the particular methods which may be used to the best advantage in the various classes.

*How can the Success of These Meetings be Furthered?*—If they are to prove successful, a friendly feeling must prevail, a Christian enthusiasm inspire, and order be preserved. They should not, however, be so formal that the work will be impeded by undue restraint; and, above all, they should not be dull but interesting. A glowing spirituality should prompt all;

and this should be maintained and guided by a thoroughly practical purpose. Let the Church of Christ and the truth it teaches be exalted. The question is, what has God said, and what truth does He wish to convey by His word. What must we do to be saved? The teachers must learn the true answer to this question and be able to bear it as a message of joy to their pupils on the following Sunday.

Among those present at these meetings, no one should be unduly prominent. Some are eager to give expression to all their ideas and to answer every question. Others shrink from public notice and remain silent. Both classes must be wisely and tactfully handled, the excessively reticent drawn out, and the excessively loquacious partially, yet politely silenced, the one encouraged, the other restrained. Then, too, there is generally present at least one or two cranks. A crank may be described as one who sees things out of their due proportion, and, consequently, while magnifying lesser things, minimizes greater ones. He is one whose ideas are distorted, and whose judgment is biased and erroneous. If possible, he should be set aright. But if all efforts fail, as they

most likely will, then he must be suppressed. Otherwise, he will divert the attention from the serious matter at hand, stir up opposition, and cause ill feeling, which may result in some remaining away from the meetings. All must be done cheerfully yet earnestly, in unity and faith.

From teachers' meetings, conducted in this manner and held weekly, inestimable good certainly comes both to the teacher and the child, to the Sunday-school and the parish.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE DUTIES OF THE HOME TO THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*The Home and the Sunday-School Must Labor as One.*—Education to be true must be deeply religious. To educate the child rightly in his religion, the home must unite with the Church and work zealously with this under its direction and supervision. Moreover, since, especially during the earlier years of life, the child spends most of his time in the home, is most continuously, directly, and personally under the care and guidance of his parents, most intimately associated with them, and most potently influenced by their word and example, it is only to be expected that in things natural the home should have the greatest efficiency in the molding and upbuilding of his character. The pastor, the director, and the teacher, on the other hand, see comparatively little of these children, are with them only for one brief hour or so each week, and even

during that time so great is the number of children and so numerous the duties to be performed that very little personal attention can be given to any individual. The Sunday-school, in fact, can do little more than merely to encourage, direct, and complete the child's home education. Hence if the parents refuse or neglect to perform their duty in this, then only through special help received from on High can the Sunday-school avoid failure in its work of training the children aright.

*Each Has its Own Work to Perform.*—If the child is to be rightly educated in his religion, certain results must be effected. Prayers must be said by the child, Sunday-school lessons learned, Christianity practised, the laws of morality observed, evil associates avoided, and only good habits formed. In the accomplishment of this, both the home and the Church has its proper work to perform.

*What is to be Done by Each?*—Even in regard to particular duties only a general answer can be given to this question.

*In Regard to Prayer.*—It is the parents' sacred duty and sweet privilege to make the lives of their children prayerful. From a parent's lips and at a parent's

knee, these little ones should learn to lisp their morning and evening prayers to God. Certain prayers should be said by every Catholic child in the morning and at night; others are for various occasions. The Sunday-school should tell the child what these are, and then, if necessary, even encourage and assist the child to learn and say them. The parents should see that as a matter of fact the children do learn these prayers and do say them regularly and devoutly.

*In Regard to Sunday-School Lessons.*— The Sunday-school assigns the weekly lessons, explains their truth, and then on the following Sunday finds out whether or not the children have memorized these and learned them thoroughly. The work of the parents is to see that as a matter of fact the children memorize these lessons word for word, and also understand, in as far as they are capable, the doctrinal truth found therein.

*In Regard to the Practice of Religion.*— The Sunday-school must instruct each child, not only in the practice of prayer, but also as to how and when he is to assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, receive the sacraments, and attend devotions.

The parents must see that the children actually follow these instructions regularly and religiously.

*In Regard to Christian Morality.*—The Sunday-school must instruct each child thoroughly in the principles of Christian morality, and must so assist each one that he will form definite and clear ideas as to precisely what is right and what is wrong, and that he will know even the specific malice of those sins which he is most liable to commit. The parents must find out whether or not their children really understand this, and must help them to form sensitive, yet true consciences.

*In Regard to Companionship.*—The Sunday-school must explain to each child the sinfulness and peril of associating with evil companions, as also the duty and advantage of going with those who are virtuous and Catholic. The parents must vigilantly guard their children from evil influence, and continue so to guide and encourage them that their companions will be the best possible, at least, morally and religiously.

*In Regard to Habits.*—The Sunday-school must do all in its power to have the

child avoid bad habits and form good ones. The parents must leave nothing possible undone to save their children from every vice. This is an all-important duty. A child can be saved from the formation of bad habits, but after these habits are once formed, it is most difficult, and at times seemingly impossible, to rescue him from their slavery and make him victorious over their thraldom.

*No Definite Line of Demarcation Can be Drawn Between the Duties of the Parents and Those of the Sunday-School.*— In effecting the religious education of the child, certain work is to be done. For the accomplishment of this, the home and the Church are laboring together. Sometimes so zealously do the parents assist in the performance of this duty that little remains to be done by the Church except to complete the instruction given at home, to conduct the religious exercises, and to administer the sacraments. Occasionally, however, the parents are so negligent about religion and the children so careless, that practically everything depends on the Church. In this case the Church may labor as best it can, but still it

will fail in many things, simply because it has not received that assistance which is necessary for complete success, the co-operative help of parents and home.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARY

*The Advantages of a Sunday-School Library Are Many.*—In these days of improved methods, a complete Sunday-school outfit includes some things which are not absolutely required and which many schools can not really afford. Others things, however, are included which are most desirable, even necessary, and which can be had by nearly every school. Such is the Catholic library. If there exists any Sunday-school without a Catholic library, it is, generally speaking, either because the helpfulness, in fact, the necessity of this is not realized, or else because those in charge are unwilling to undergo the inconvenience which the effort required for procuring and caring for this demands. The advantages derived from having a Catholic library attached to the Sunday-school are many. Only a few will be mentioned.

1. It acts as an incentive and reward for Sunday-school attendance and thus increases the number of those who attend regularly.

2. It keeps alive in the homes an active interest in the Sunday-school. In many homes, these books are prized as the chief reading obtainable, and are eagerly read not only by the children, but also by the older members of the family.

3. It carries the influence of the Sunday-school into the home. In a great many homes there are some who are careless about their lives. By reading these interesting and practically religious books, they are gradually, sometimes quickly, aroused to a realization of their duties and led back to a better life. In many other homes, there are some who either have fallen away from their Church, or else are not of our Faith. These attend no Church and really know or hear little of God or of the future life. Still they are fond of reading and anxious to learn; that is, if they can do so by themselves and unobserved. These are brought into the Church, or back to the practice of their religion, by the reading of Catholic books. Perhaps in no other way could

this have been effected. Thousands are saved by the reading of Catholic literature, and millions are led quietly but surely onward to a better life. There is, in fact, no influence in the secular world to-day mightier than that of the press. There should be no mightier human influence in the Church than that of Catholic literature. One means of increasing this world-wide power for good, and thus of increasing the efficiency of the Sunday-school, is to have a well-supplied and up-to-date Catholic library to which all the members of the Sunday-school have free and easy access.

*The Sunday-School Library is a Necessity.*—These and numerous other advantages make the Sunday-school library not only a luxury and help, but a necessity. The library is a necessary, an essentially necessary part of a complete Sunday-school. If it is not had, much good will be left undone. Some will never be brought under the saving influence of the Church, many will grow up with weak faith and infirm virtue, many will drift away and be lost. The one who realizes that these evils are caused by a want of Catholic literature in the home, and who can remedy

them and thus save many souls, but who refuses or neglects to do so, and thus stands idly by while these abandoned ones are drifting perhaps unconsciously downward into eternal ruin, has just reason to tremble for his own salvation. As he treats others, God may treat him. It is just as necessary to have the Word of God preached in the home by means of Catholic literature, as it is to have it preached from the pulpit, and often it is far more effective for good.

*The Library Should be Catholic.*— Sometimes books are placed in Sunday-school libraries, which although instructive, classical, and of high-toned intellectuality, have practically nothing to do with Christianity. Some have said, the purpose of such a library is to supply reading throughout the week, to elevate and educate intellectually as well as religiously. The Sunday-school, however, is a distinctly religious institution, and includes secular education only in so far as this appertains to the religious world. Hence to place in the Sunday-school library books that have no reference to God or to life-everlasting is to dissipate the influence of the school and divert its efforts from the true pur-

pose. In the Sunday-school library, therefore, only such books should be found as are helpful to the Christian life. Even the Bible, however, contains under one cover literature of many kinds, science, history, biography, poetry, philosophy, and theology, all of which throw light on the relation of God to man and the duties of man to his God; so also the Sunday-school library may have on its shelves books of all the various kinds of literature, and still every one of its books should be such as will tend directly to the upbuilding of the religious life. The science of its books should be true science, revealing God's creation to the mental gaze; the history should be true history, telling of how man served his God; and the fiction should be Christian in tone, picturing forth lives and ideals truthful and Catholic. In a word, all of its books should be Catholic in the truest and noblest meaning of that word. Everything narrow, bigoted, degrading, immoral, or tending in any way to lower life and its ideals, should be kept out of it, or if found therein, consigned at once to the flames.

If any persons should desire literature of a strictly secular nature, they may se-

cure this from the public library or from some other source.

*The Library Books Should be Well Selected.*—It would be most advantageous if these books could be read by some member of a judicious committee before being purchased. This would be the surest method, but one very often impossible. At least, the books should be purchased from publishers who know their books and can be trusted to furnish only those which are suitable. The imprint of certain religious houses is generally sufficient guarantee that the book is Catholic and desirable.

*How Are These Books to be Secured?* — After a suitable library has become established in the Sunday-school and the people have begun to realize its usefulness and necessity, little effort is required for its maintenance. Securing the books is the most difficult part of the work; but this is far easier than may appear. They may be received as a personal donation, or purchased from the proceeds of an entertainment or special collection. In one parish they were secured by the men's society; in another, through the efforts of all the sodalities united. A third parish took advantage of the admirable plan outlined by Benziger Brothers. The older children of

the Sunday-school were organized into Reading Clubs. Ten cents was paid monthly by each member. Having collected the first dues, each Club forwarded one dollar as the first payment for a number of selected standard Catholic books, and received at once a library which was put into immediate circulation. During a single year, these were all paid for from the funds thus raised. The older and better established parishes find it more convenient and satisfactory to pay for these books with money from the Church treasury. Our people, when rightly instructed and made to realize the vast and eternal good which the library brings to themselves and to their children, do not object to this. For seldom or never are they niggardly when convinced that a worthy cause solicits their support.

*Who Should be Appointed Librarian?*—To secure a competent and desirable librarian is not always easy. It is, however, suicidal to the success of the library to place in charge of it one who is merely able to pass out the books called for, to receive those returned, and to keep a record of all. The person selected for librarian should be an intelligent, practical Catholic, who is so familiar both with the

library and the individual members of the Sunday-school as to be able to tell unhesitatingly which book is best for each.

*The Librarian Has Many Duties.*—Only the more important will be considered.

1. He should value his work. He should love books and, appreciating the almost unlimited power of a large and well-selected Catholic library, earnestly endeavor by all means possible to increase its Christianizing influence over the Sunday-school, the parish, and the community.

2. He should make the library as useful as possible. This can not be done without a good catalogue, wherein is found in summary form the name, the character, and the cost of each book. Aided by this, as also by his own personal knowledge and experience, he should endeavor to guide the taste and selection of the several pupils. In this, as also in the work of fostering in the Sunday-school a true love for Catholic literature, he should be zealously assisted by the teachers.

3. A simple yet systematic record must be kept of all books taken out, from which it will be clearly manifest who has each book and how long he has had this in his possession. The return of these books must also be recorded. While the

books remain uncalled for, he must keep them classified and in order.

*A Reference Library for Teachers is Often Useful.*—A small school may not need this. Some, even of the larger ones, can not afford it. Still, especially for these, it is most desirable, because it serves to render the teachers more efficient and the Sunday-school more successful. One such library wrought untold good. It was placed in one of the classrooms easily accessible at all times to the teachers. It contained many of the best reference books on the catechism and also hand-books on Christian doctrine, pamphlets on Sunday-school methods, treatises on teaching, and the like. It was greatly prized and much used by the teachers, for they realized the need of this help, which could not otherwise be secured. From it they learned the best explanations of Christian doctrine, became familiar with the best examples and stories used to illustrate these, as also with the latest approved methods of successful teaching, and the Sunday-school reaped therefrom a rich advantage.

## CHAPTER XXV

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPPLIES

*Many Supplies Are Needed.*—Convenient rooms, suitable text-books, and a well-selected Catholic library by no means comprise the entire outfit necessary for a successfully conducted Sunday-school. Ever more apparent is becoming the real usefulness of modern helps. These are now to be found in abundance. Some are of great value, even essentially necessary for complete success. Others are helpful, but by no means indispensable. No Sunday-school which has suitable quarters, efficient teachers, standard text-books, convenient blackboards, a well-stocked library and up-to-date Sunday-school papers, should feel that it is not supplied with an outfit sufficient for successful work.

*The Blackboard is an Indispensable Help.*—This can be used most efficiently by a skilful teacher, and even one not ex-

pert with the crayon can emphasize the lesson on the board as in no other way. Blackboards can be secured at a reasonable price in all styles and sizes. Many prefer one mounted in such a way that it can be swung around so as to show the reverse side. Others find those made from linoleum to be sufficiently serviceable. Colored crayons are often found both convenient and helpful, especially for map drawing, reviews, and the like.

*Sunday-School Papers Are a Necessity.* —These are as desirable and essentially necessary as the library itself. For the younger children they are even more so. These little ones are unable to appreciate, or in fact to read, a library book, and often would do little with it except to injure and destroy it. A library that was allowed to pass through their hands would soon become worthless. But an attractive and interesting paper which is at the same time rational and Catholic is admirably adapted to their needs. Such papers neatly printed and fully illustrated can now be secured at a small, at a comparatively inconsiderable, cost. For the more advanced pupils, a more advanced paper could be supplied, although this is often

unnecessary. Even the teachers, especially when they have no access to a reference library, could, with profit to themselves and to the entire school, be furnished with some publication which would aid them in the preparation of their work. To supply these various papers will, it is true, entail some expense; but this can be met in various ways, and even if it has to be paid from the church treasury, it is as essentially necessary as are the other church expenditures, and the money thus paid out will be refunded with a manifold increase both by the children and by their parents. It is generally found that these papers are read more or less thoroughly by nearly all the persons living in the home. Hence they serve to give a Catholic tone of mind and thought to the entire parish.

*Maps Are Very Helpful.*—They may be used with advantage in nearly all classes. For those in Bible and Church History they are of great importance. It is, in fact, impossible to teach these subjects without their use. Those maps which are, or should be, found in every text-book of Bible and Church History are not only helpful but in many cases sufficient. Still

it is often found very convenient and advantageous to have before the eyes of the entire class large maps to which reference can frequently be made. Among those maps which are most useful should be mentioned that of the Bible lands, of Egypt and Sinai, of Palestine in the time of the Judges as also in the time of Christ, that of the world in Apostolic days, in the Middle Ages, and of the present time. Whenever it is found impossible or even difficult to purchase these, they may be prepared by the director or by some of the teachers from outline maps filled in as accurately and neatly as possible in various colors.

*Religious Pictures Are Useful.*—These are by no means essentially necessary; still they often prove most helpful. One seldom overestimates the truth which these instil into the minds of children and the influence for good which they exert over the hearts of the young. It would be well in fact if in every class-room some of these pictures were hung so that they might be clearly seen by every child. Nothing in this line is more easily secured and at the same time more suitable than highly-colored lithographs of scenes taken from the Bible, from the life of Christ, or

the history of the Church. Besides these large pictures, much good is often effected by means of smaller cards of similar subjects, given to the individual members of the class. On the reverse side of these is sometimes printed explanation and instruction adapted both to interest and to educate. From the Sunday-school these are taken into the home, and certainly they must exert a Catholic influence over its every member. A little picture in the hand of a child will sometimes change a human heart more effectively than even the most eloquent of sermons.

*A Mimeograph or Printing Press May Sometimes be Useful.*—For some Sunday-schools a mimeograph or small printing press is used in preparing programs, tickets, review questions, music specially composed, and the like.

*The Stereopticon Has Been Used with Advantage.*—Some of our best Sunday-schools are now using with gratifying results the stereopticon. Slides are specially prepared, or purchased, or rented for the occasion. These present scenes connected with the Bible, with the life of Christ and His apostles, and with the history of the Church during the various

ages. The stereopticon, however, is comparatively expensive, and hence it may be that only the larger and stronger schools can afford to have it.

*A Museum is Sometimes Had.*—More than one of our Sunday-schools is possessed of a museum wherein is found a choice collection of religious pictures, relics, specimens, and curiosities. These prove very useful at times in explaining Bible and Church History, and even Christian doctrine. In one such museum is found beautiful pictures illustrating stories and incidents of the Bible and Church history, many possessions of the world's most sainted ones, a model of the Temple of Solomon, many models of Oriental houses, hand mills, plows, garments, and other similar things, albums of dried and pressed plants from the Holy Land, grains and seeds such as are mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, and numerous other articles of similar interest.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL REWARDS

*Rewards of Merit Are Desirable.*—In all systems of educating the young, it has been found desirable to devise some means by which the pupils may be stimulated to do their best work. No stimulus is better, it is true, and more to be desired than a proper appreciation of the benefits derived from true education; but an appreciation such as this comes only with years and with education itself. It has little influence during the earlier years of life; and hence at this time other forms of encouragement, such as rewards, are more effective in eliciting the child's best effort.

*The Prevailing Method of Reward is Twofold.*—The most successful of our schools employ two methods of reward: the one offers pecuniary inducements, as scholarships, prizes, and the like; the other appeals to the pupil's sense of self-

respect by offering credit marks, honors, and promotion. With many, the first method is more successful; with some, the second. Both of these methods have long been employed with success by the secular schools. They are now being used extensively in the Sunday-school, and their effectiveness is appreciated and acknowledged by all.

*For What Should Rewards be Given?*—This will depend largely on the condition of affairs in the Sunday-school, on the character of the pupils who attend, and on the particular result which the director is striving to effect. A few worthy causes of reward will be mentioned. These may serve to suggest others.

*Regularity and Promptness of Attendance.*—These ought certainly to be encouraged; and seldom is encouragement wanting, for generally they are first to receive merited reward. The reason of this is, no doubt, because they are so noticeable and effect so vitally the apparent prosperity of the school. Some schools reward good attendance monthly, others weekly, by giving some little present, as a picture card or Sunday-school paper, to those, and only to those, who are not ab-

sent or tardy. This latter method generally proves most satisfactory.

*Well-learned Lessons.*—The children should be encouraged by every means possible to learn their lessons well, and when they have been faithful in this, they should be recognized as worthy of commendation and reward. As to the particular reward which should be given, much will depend on circumstances. Among the treasures of one who was in Sunday-school over fifty years ago is a certificate neatly framed, specifying that he had committed to memory and recited accurately the entire catechism. What child would not labor to win and ever afterward be proud of such a certificate? In our Sunday-schools of today beautiful certificates issued for religious accomplishments are all too rare.

*Bringing New Pupils into the Sunday-School.*—There are in every parish at least some children whom it is very difficult for the Sunday-school director to meet personally and to induce to attend instruction. What he is unable to effect can perhaps be done by some small child. Why should such available help remain as if despised? To these little ones, even as to others, was given the command to go

into the highways and byways and to bring in strangers to the Gospel feast. To be taught and trained to do this willingly and effectively is an essential part of the child's religious education. In the hearts of the young should be developed a love for helping others on to salvation. The Sunday-school should train its members to go forth and by their influence to win others to a better life. If they are not educated to do this in childhood, they will not be disposed to do it in later years. Then, too, in the Sunday-school, as in other organizations, the co-operation of every member is needed to bring complete success. Every child of the parish must be influenced by some means to attend Sunday-school regularly. Whenever a child is found to assist in this work, he deserves recognition and reward. His zeal in these missionary efforts should be fostered, guided, and rewarded, judiciously and wisely, according to conditions and persons.

*Which Gifts and Honors Are Most Suitable for Rewards?*—Among the pecuniary rewards, those are most desirable which are of a religious nature; such as a Catholic book or magazine, a prayer-book or

beautiful rosary, a gold cross or pin. The one who presents these, however, must be both judicious and tactful, or else he will cause more harm than good. Among those honors which appeal to the sense of self-respect, and which are best fitted for awakening a healthy spirit of emulation and a desire to do better things, several have been bestowed. A roll of honor made out and read or placed on the bulletin board of the Sunday-school, or in the vestibule of the church where it could be seen by all, has in many cases incited both child and parent to do better work. Certificates issued for excellence in work have proven most effective and ought to be more widely introduced. Sometimes a book specially labeled has been placed in the library, or a picture specially marked hung on the wall, to commemorate the excellent work done by some class, or by one of its members. A memorial given by the Sunday-school, in evidence of its pleasure at the excellence of a certain schoolmate, is generally greatly prized. Some assert that nothing is more likely to gratify a class or individual and to stimulate others to do their best than a memorial which will remain in

future years as a witness of special effort and success. All this, however, is said chiefly for the sake of suggestion. For after all, the exact reward which is best for the individual pupil must be determined in each case by the one in charge according to persons, conditions, and circumstances. Even before giving any reward at all, the pastor or director should know with certainty that its bestowal will promote the general good of the Sunday-school. Otherwise it should be withheld, lest it might prove useless, or even detrimental and injurious.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL HALL ARCHITECTURE

*It Is of Various Styles and Generally Defective.*—In the matter of architecture, the Sunday-school is generally obliged to accept what it can get. Comparatively few are the parishes that have a suitably planned and adequately equipped Sunday-school hall. Where a parochial school is had, the Sunday-school is generally held in its class-rooms, with each grade almost, if not quite, separated from the others. Some churches have a Sunday-school hall with one or more side rooms partitioned off and opening into it. Still the main body of the Sunday-school members are forced to remain in the one hall for instructions. Other churches have a Sunday-school hall without any side rooms. This is generally a large barn-shaped room, poorly lighted, ill-ventilated, and furnished with few if any of the modern conveniences. Here the children are crowded

together and sit huddled about in classes. It is unnecessary to describe, to one who has visited such a Sunday-school, the scene of confusion and disorder, the din of talk and laughter, there witnessed, and it is needless to declare that fully two-thirds of the energy expended by the teachers, and more than two-thirds of the children's time, is absolutely wasted; also that these children are not well instructed in their religion, and, as a result, that scores of them in almost every parish whose Sunday-school is thus conducted, and hundreds of them from the larger Sunday-schools of this sort, drift away from the Church and are in all probability lost forever to Christ. This, however, in some few cases can not be remedied; money is wanting, or other necessities are not at hand. Often the church itself is used as a Sunday-school hall. In other places there is not even a church, and Sunday-school has to be held in a public hall, or at the home of some parishioner.

*The Sunday-School Class Should be Together and yet Separated.*—This result has been effected by having a common meeting-place for the opening and closing exercises, with separate rooms for the in-

dividual class-work. These are sometimes so built as to open into the main audience hall, but with doors easily closed so that the recitation can be carried on without interruption. Several of the churches which were able to do so have provided for their Sunday-schools in this way.

*The Sunday-School Room Should be Suitably Furnished.*—Its furniture should be convenient and agreeable, yet plain and durable. If the seats or desks are unsightly or uncomfortable, the children will pay little heed to the recitation and will feel inclined to remain away rather than submit to such inflicted suffering.

In a word, both the hall and the several rooms should be so planned, built, and equipped as to render the Sunday-school as effective as possible in its work of educating the young in their religion.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### BRANCH SUNDAY-SCHOOLS

*Branch Sunday-Schools are Desirable.*—The Sunday-school, being an essential part of the organized Church, should be found in all parts of the Catholic world. Every home, in fact, should be organized, as it were, into a school where the religion of Christ is systematically studied and practised. It should be as a home department of the Church where the lessons assigned at the Sunday-school are memorized, learned, and embodied into every-day life. Then, on Sunday all the pupils of these several homes should meet for a general session, with lessons thoroughly mastered. When this is done, the Home and the Church can truthfully be said to labor as one in Sunday-school work.

*Home Department Schools Are Sometimes Necessary.*—In some cases, the families live so far away from the church that

it is practically impossible for the children to attend Sunday-school, or perhaps even Mass, except on rare occasions. Unless there is organized in these homes a school of Christian doctrine, wherein religious instruction is imparted, the children thereof will grow up ignorant of Christianity and indifferent to its precepts. Ordinarily, it is not difficult for the pastor or the one whom he has placed in charge of the Sunday-school to visit these homes now and then, or at least to meet the parents and secure their co-operation, to outline a systematic course of study for the children, to see that this is properly given, to supplement this home teaching, and when the opportune time arrives to manage in some way, if it is possible, to have these pupils come to the church Sunday-school for special instructions in preparation for receiving the sacraments. In this way, the children far removed from the church are taught their holy religion and trained in its practice.

*Branch Schools Are in Some Places Necessary.*—What has been said of homes far distant from the church, is equally true when applied to hamlets and neigh-

borhoods similarly located. The children living in these remote places can not be saved to Christ and His Church unless they are sufficiently instructed in their religion. Hence sometimes, owing to unfavorable home conditions, it is found necessary to organize and maintain a branch Sunday-school, where these children may meet at regularly appointed times and receive a complete course of religious instruction. Into this school, all the pupils are gathered. Sometimes it will be possible for the pastor himself to be present and conduct its recitations. But often he may have to leave this to another whom he deems qualified and competent. There are some churches, situated in the midst of large agricultural districts, which have several of these branch schools, all prospering under the supervision of zealous pastors and all accomplishing great and lasting good. By them, many children who otherwise, with all their descendants, would drift away from the Church into infidelity, are being trained up with their parents into practical Church members. In fact, it is often the neglect of missionary activity such as this that causes the influ-

ence of the Church to decline in rural districts, its membership gradually to decrease, and many souls to be lost.

*Children Living Far from the Church May Require Special Classes Instructed at Special Times.*—The children who live in country parishes may generally be divided into two classes, those living in town, or comparatively near the church, and those living in the country, or far removed from it. Those of the former class can attend Sunday-school at almost any time during the morning or afternoon. This, however, is not often true of those who live perhaps miles away from the church. It is seldom easy for such to get back and forth. It generally necessitates a long walk or else the harnessing and driving of horses which in many cases are already tired and overworked. In the summer the heat is sometimes insufferable; in the winter the snow often makes the roads impassable, as also does the mud in the spring and fall. Consequently, these children are very liable to be neglected. The home department work and the branch Sunday-school can accomplish much. Still, they can not do all that is desirable. They assist the Church, but are far infe-

rior to it in efficiency. Hence, in as far as it is possible these children must be induced to attend the Church Sunday-school. In some parishes this is accomplished by organizing a special class, or several if necessary, to be heard and instructed immediately before or after the morning Mass. This makes attendance at Sunday-school possible for these children, and renders the second trip to the church unnecessary. Then, too, their presence at these short but carefully prepared recitations in Christian doctrine results in their more regular attendance at Mass. Rewards can be given at this special session, papers and books distributed, and all else done which is deemed necessary or desirable.

*Each Pastor Must Make Arrangements for His Own Sunday-School.*—The exact place, time, and manner of imparting religious instruction and training to the children can not by any means be determined definitely for all cases. This must be decided by the individual pastor after seriously taking into consideration the needs and conditions of his parish. His one great aim, however, must be to educate each child in the truth and practice

of Christianity, and to make him more and more like unto "another Christ." To effect this, he must use those means, employ those methods, and appoint that time and place which he considers best under the existing circumstances.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE CATHOLIC SUNDAY-SCHOOL AND NON-CATHOLIC CHILDREN

*Non-Catholic Children Ought to Attend the Catholic Sunday-School.*—Christ established one Church, which history and revelation conclusively show to have been the Catholic Church. He commissioned this to go forth and teach the Gospel to all mankind, irrespective of nationality or religious profession. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of the Catholic Church to endeavor as best it can to lead into its fold every man, woman, and child living on earth, and to do this not merely for the sake of bringing them into the Church, and thereby increasing its membership, but rather for the sake of teaching them the clearly revealed truth of Christ, of influencing them to do His holy Will and thereby to gain for themselves the enjoyment of heaven's eternal bliss.

Non-Catholic children ought to save their souls. They can succeed in this only

by doing what Christ has commanded. They can not obey Christ, however, unless they first know His truth and commandments. These are best explained and taught in the Catholic Sunday-school. Hence those who would most surely be saved, including of course non-Catholic children, ought to attend this Sunday-school and learn with certainty what they must do in order to obtain heaven.

These children ought not to be abandoned, as they too often are. Christ died for them as truly as He did for the children of Catholics; and established His Church for their salvation, even as for ours. He has commissioned His Church to preach the Gospel to them, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The bishops, priests, religious, and members of His Church, therefore, are bound in charity to do what they can to induce these little ones to believe, to be baptized, and to be saved.

*How Should We Regard Non-Catholics?* —In dealing with non-Catholics, we should ever bear in mind that Christ, as their personal Friend and divine Redeemer, has invited them, the children of His

Father, to accept the means of salvation which He offers. More than this, lest they might decline to accept His invitation, and as a consequence remain in the perilous state of ignorance, He has commanded them, under the pain of mortal sin, to become practical members of His Church. Many, it is true, are continuing to disobey Christ in this. They are persevering in their refusal to enter the true fold. This deplorable fact, however, is, generally speaking, due not so much to sinful and obstinate disobedience as to the want of a certain conviction that this is really the will and command of God. Hence, in matters religious, we should regard non-Catholics as persons unfortunately misguided, but nevertheless earnestly sincere in their desire to learn the truth and to follow it.

*How Are We to Deal with Non-Catholics?*—Since it is only right and just to regard those outside the Church as truly sincere in their religious belief, at least until the contrary is clearly evident, in all religious dealings our one great effort should be to lead them to a clearer knowledge of the truth and to a more perfect conformity to its law. If there is anything which we

can accomplish that will enable our non-Catholic friends better to know and do the clearly revealed will of Christ, and thereby to become more Christlike and certain of salvation, by all means this should be done by us in the most effective way possible.

*Great Prudence Should Direct Our Efforts.*—Unless we are wise and tactful in our effort to bring non-Catholics to a knowledge of the true faith, almost certain failure will result, and very often the harm done will be irreparable. Misguided zeal effects little, save the engendering of ill-feeling and hostility. It seldom lights up the way which leads to God, but tends rather to strengthen the conviction of non-Catholics that Christ neither commands nor wills them to enter the Catholic Church. Very often it increases their prejudice and makes them more inclined to believe calumniation; and hence, instead of leading them nearer to Christ, causes them to depart further from the Light, the Truth, and the Way. It is far from easy, however, to change a person's religious convictions, either for the better or for the worse. The ideas of childhood may be modified by age, but they are seldom ef-

faced from the mind. Hence to induce one who has arrived at the age of maturity, and who is conscientious in the practice of religion, to abandon one form of religious belief for another is, to say the least, extremely difficult, unless some special grace has been received from on High. Generally the Catholic dies a Catholic; and, unless the grace of God works some unusual change, the unbeliever, after having once reached the age of maturity, continues such even until death. Hence if the non-Catholic world is to be brought into the full light of Christ's revealed truth, the children of all races and denominations must during their childhood years learn to know God's true religion, to love its beauty, and to obey its command.

*The Children of all Denominations Should be Prudently Encouraged to Attend the Catholic Sunday-School.*—These little ones are thoroughly sincere in their efforts to do God's will and eager to learn what is good and helpful. In the Catholic Sunday-school all this is taught and nothing is heard which even borders on sin and vice. The doctrines of the Catholic Church are free from trace of error, and

include all the good and true which is found in the teaching of every other denomination.

Moreover, there are in this country millions of children whose parents attend no church and make no profession of religious belief. These go to no Sunday-school whatever. Why should they not be welcomed into ours; and even, when possible and prudent, induced to attend?

They need not be forced. To attempt this would be unwise and useless. They need not be dragged at once to the baptismal font, and compelled, as it were, to receive the sacraments. But let them attend the Sunday-school; welcome them kindly and make them feel at home. Let them listen to the exposition of our holy religion, and behold for themselves the reasonableness of our belief, the truthfulness of our doctrines, the power of God's grace, and the beauty, the glory, the divinity of Christ's Church. If they continue to do this, they will be led sweetly and kindly on to the baptismal font, to the practice of Catholicity, to the reception of the sacraments, to Christ, and to the eternal happiness of God. Even if they attend but for one Sunday, this will mean

the accomplishment of at least some good. We should not, therefore, be reluctant or careless about prudently encouraging their regular attendance. For these little ones are priceless in the sight of Christ and dear to His sacred Heart. Their salvation has been purchased by His precious blood. His one great desire in their regard is to have them in heaven with Himself. In order to effect this He commands them to become members of His holy Church, and He commands us to strive as best we can to lead them into the fold thereof. His command is our law, to be obeyed in all things. His will must be done.

In our endeavor to accomplish this, however, no method or means should be employed except such as will redound to the spiritual welfare of the greatest number. It should be made clearly evident to these non-Catholics, that no motive prompts our effort save an unselfish desire to promote their own best and eternal good. Often should they be counseled to kneel in prayer to God, asking Him to guide them to the accomplishment of His will, on through life into heaven. They should be made to understand thoroughly, that entering

the Catholic Church is a matter of conscience which rests between themselves individually and God; and that God's will in this matter, after it is clearly and certainly known, must be done in all things and at all cost. Finally, they should be brought to realize fully how little the Church as an institution profits from the membership of any individual, and how great, endless, and priceless are the advantages which we as members derive from its guidance, its truth, and its saving grace. Heaven with all its joyous delights, its beauty and glory, with the unceasing companionship of angels and saints, and, above all, with that beatific bliss eternal which comes from seeing God face to face, is the reward we are offered for loving obedience to the will of Christ as manifested through His holy Church.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL ENDEAVORING TO EDUCATE CATHOLICS

*To be a Catholic is to Live as Another Christ.*—Christ while on earth knew God, loved Him, and served Him faithfully throughout life. In all things He did the will of His heavenly Father. After death He ascended glorious and immortal into heaven. To us He has said, "Follow Me." In as far as we obey this command by striving to be like unto Him in our knowledge, our love, and our serving of God, we become His followers, Christians and Catholics.

*The Children Must be Made Catholic.*—The Sunday-school in its endeavor to make the lives of its members Catholic, or Christlike, must not be like unto those "beating the air," without definitely preconceived purpose, plan, and method; but it must have clearly in view what it is striving to accomplish and how this can best be effected. Its work is threefold.

It must picture forth and develop in the minds of the children Christlike ideas of God and His creation, as also of life temporal and eternal; it must instil into their hearts and zealously foster therein such a love for God as will prompt them to do in all things that which is recognized as the divine will; and it must educate them to live at all times as Christ Himself would live if He were in their place and sent by His heavenly Father to fulfill their mission in life.

*The Children Must be Educated to Believe the Church as Christ's Infallible Teacher.*—In order to become Christlike by doing in all things the will of their heavenly Father, they must know clearly and definitely what He has commanded. This they will know in one way only, by learning thoroughly and believing firmly the infallible teaching of the Catholic Church. It is a matter of vital importance, therefore, that they hold as truth revealed the fact that Christ established His Church to last until the end of time, and to teach with infallible voice His doctrine to all nations, and thereby to make known to the entire world His divine will. When a child has been

thoroughly convinced of this, he will unhesitatingly accept the teaching of the Church as the true teaching of Christ, and he will invariably perceive in the command of the Church the will of his incarnate God.

*The Children Must be Taught to Obey the Church as Christ's Duly Authorized Representative.*—If they know the will of our blessed Lord, infallibly taught by the Catholic Church, their ideas concerning sin will be both clear and definite. They will understand exactly what they must do in order to commit a mortal sin, in order to commit a venial sin, and in order to avoid the commission of all sin. This the individual child should thoroughly know. Moreover, in as far as it is deemed best, each child should be thoroughly instructed concerning the malice of sin, especially of those mortal sins which he is most liable to commit. In this way, by true and exact instruction, his conscience should be rightly formed, so that it will be neither too lax nor too strict, but Christlike. So thoroughly and accurately should this be done, that each child will be able to determine with reasonable correctness when he has sinned mortally,

when venially, and when he has not sinned at all. After this has been done, the individual child must be influenced and educated to detest and avoid whatever the Church forbids as sinful, and also to love and practise whatever it commends as being virtuous and Christian.

*The Children Can Not do This without the Help of Grace.*—Nothing is more essentially necessary to the child than a thorough realization of this fact. For so weak is human nature and so easily inclined to sin, that without some special enlightening, prompting, and empowering help received from God, no one can do even those things which are absolutely required for gaining heaven. If the Sunday-school would save the children, therefore, by developing and transforming them into other Christs, it must make them proof against the enticement of sin, by educating them so to understand what grace really is and so to appreciate the Christianizing power it bestows, that they will ever strive as best they can to have it present and increasing in their souls. Moreover, it must teach these children definitely how this grace of God is most certainly and abundantly obtained. In

other words, the Sunday-school must make its members realize that if they would obtain from God that grace which is necessary for their salvation, they must avoid evil companionship and sin, they must perform good deeds and works of penance, they must pray fervently, hear Mass devoutly, and receive the sacraments both worthily and frequently. More than this, it must so influence and educate them that they will actually perform these works and practise these devotions, and thereby secure for themselves an abundance of that sanctifying grace which Christ purchased for them by giving up His life on the cross.

*The Children Must be Actuated to Live Ever Prepared for Death.*—When they have learned to know God, when their hearts have been inflamed with His love and made to yearn with a desire to do His holy will, when they have been trained into such habits of virtue and strong Catholic devotion as will cause them to be ever careful in avoiding sin, to be zealous in the performance of good, to be fervent at prayer, devout at Mass, and frequent in the worthy reception of the sacraments, especially of holy communion, then they

will have become in very deed as other Christs, prepared for death and judgment. After they have become accustomed to the living of such a life, it is found that they seldom depart for any long duration of time from its way, and therefore that their salvation is practically almost certain. Hence to assist Christ and His holy Church in effecting this accomplishment is the Sunday-school's one great mission. For no other purpose is it maintained. For no other reason does it exist.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### TEACHING THE CHILDREN TO PRAY

*Prayer is Necessary for Salvation.*—No child who has come to the use of reason can live a Catholic life and save his soul without it. He will never gain heaven, unless he is assisted by the enlightening help, the prompting inspiration, and the sanctifying power which heartfelt prayer secures from God. Not to have the children pray, therefore, is to suffer them to be deprived of that grace which is necessary for their salvation.

*The Children Must be Taught how to Pray.*—To pray is to be present before the throne of God, and with fervent love to speak with Him as if we saw Him face to face. The children go to our heavenly Father; now they praise Him with adoring hearts; now they seek merciful pardon for sin; now they ask for a special blessing; and now they return thanks for the many favors granted. This is prayer.

To live in the presence of Christ, before His face, within His view, to labor in the fulfilling of those duties which He has entrusted to our performance, to ask repeatedly and prayerfully His divine co-operation, to do all things for Him, to please His sacred Heart, is to live a life of prayer and to pray always. This fact, so true and so inspiring, can not be too vividly and deeply impressed on the minds and hearts of the children. In some way they must be made to realize thoroughly that Christ is ever near, yearning with an infinite desire to help them in every need, and speaking in silent language to their souls, repeatedly saying: "Ask and you shall receive." In order to secure His aid, they must seek it with confiding love. This love of the children for Christ should be truly personal, mutual, even friendly and familiar. When prayer is prompted by love such as this, it comes from the heart, spontaneous, natural, delightful, an exhaustless source of inspiration, strength, and joy.

To go to the Blessed Virgin Mary, as also to the angels and the sainted ones who dwell in heaven with God, and to turn to them, as a loving child to its affectionate

mother or as friend to friend, and to ask their guardian protection, their help, and intercession, is to have devotion to the saints.

*The Children Should be Taught When to Pray.*—St. Paul says we should pray always. He does this who lives in the state of grace and performs all his duties of life out of loving obedience to God, to serve Him by doing His holy will, and thereby to promote His honor and glory. But there are times when special prayer, more fervent and devout, should be said and special devotion practised.

In the morning as soon as the children rise from sleep, they should kneel in prayer at least for a few moments before the throne of God, adoring and praising Him, and asking Him to be with them to help, to bless, and to protect them throughout the day. During the holy sacrifice of the Mass, which with glad hearts they ought to attend when possible, they should kneel before Christ present on the altar and prayerfully, affectionately, speak with Him in adoration. In the performance of their daily work, they should often turn to Heaven, and with all confidence seek that help which is needed for making their ef-

forts successful. In the hour of trial and temptation, when human strength and the assistance of the world seem insufficient, they should at once cry out to God for grace to persevere and overcome. Before retiring for the night, they should again kneel in the presence of Heaven. With contrite hearts, they should ask God's pardon for sin committed, and with confiding love entrust themselves during the hours of sleep to His protecting care. More than this, whenever work of special importance is to be done, God's co-operation and blessing should be sought. Above all, whenever the children are preparing to receive any one of the sacraments, their souls should be worthily disposed by fervent and rational prayer. In a word, whenever we feel that we should adore and praise and thank God, or that we can accomplish any result more successfully with His help than without it, we should pray. This rule the Sunday-school should make the guiding principle of the children's prayer and devotion.

*What Prayers Should the Children Say?* —The answer to this question depends largely on the age and the disposition of the individual child. Nevertheless, there

are certain prayers which should be said regularly and fervently by all who have come to the use of reason. Such are the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Gloria, the Apostles' Creed, the Confiteor, the Act of Contrition, and the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Besides these most useful and beautiful of Catholic prayers, there are many others suited to various occasions, which are to be recommended zealously but prudently. Ejaculatory prayers, said during every hour of the day, are especially worthy of mention. These ascend to heaven from millions of human hearts, and are heard before the throne of God. They serve to remind us that we live before the face of Heaven. They tend to keep us ever united with Christ; and they bring down into our lives countless helps and blessings from on high. Another most beautiful and helpful devotion to our blessed Mother and her divine Son is that of the holy Rosary. This is loved and cherished by every practical Catholic. Then, too, there is the Angelus, one of the sweetest professions of belief in the mystery of the Incarnation ever made by a human soul. In fact, there are

in our holy Church so many beautiful and soul-inspiring prayers, that it is necessary for each Sunday-school director to decide for himself as to which are best for the children under his charge.

In recommending and prescribing prayers, however, there is one fact which should be ever borne in mind. A few prayers fervently and frequently said are far more effective of good and far more powerful before the throne of God than a great variety which come from the lips rather than the heart. Hence every child should have certain prayers thoroughly memorized, and should be educated to say these devoutly and regularly at specified times. A habit of prayer such as this, when rightly formed in childhood, will generally continue throughout life, and serve to keep us obedient to our God and pleasing to the Sacred Heart.

*From Whom Should the Children Learn to Pray?*—Of all the blessings and privileges which parents enjoy on earth, the sweetest and most delightful is that of teaching their child to speak in loving converse with God, and to lisp in childish accent those prayers which are to be said on life's every day, and which are to en-

able it to live in obedience and union with Christ, as His follower, His friend, His beloved one. To educate the children to be prayerful is not only the parents' privilege, but it is also their bounden duty, most sacred in the sight of God. It is a duty, moreover, which they must in some way be made to realize and to perform faithfully. The Sunday-school director, therefore, must strive by all means possible to have this accomplished.

*What Must the Sunday-School do in This Work?*—The work of the Sunday-school in regard to prayer is first to specify definitely to the various teachers which prayers the pupils of their respective classes should have thoroughly memorized, and, secondly, to see that each child actually knows the prayers prescribed and really says them properly at the times designated. This may require incessant vigilance, continual effort, and great prudence, but the results accomplished will more than compensate the labor expended. After the children have been made truly and spiritually prayerful, their growth in Catholicity will be rapid. Their thoughts and desires, their character and life, will daily become more divinely Christlike.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### EDUCATING THE CHILDREN TO ASSIST PROPERLY AT MASS

*The Children Must Know Clearly What the Mass is.*—Until they are made to understand, in as far as they are capable, what the Mass really is, it would be vain to expect from them any true reverence or love for Christ offered in sacrifice on the altar. Clearly must they have pictured in their minds the scene of Calvary, the Crucifixion, and thoroughly must they be brought to realize that the sacrifice of the Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the cross; that is, that the same Christ who was nailed to the cross and who offered to His heavenly Father His blood, His life, and His all for our salvation, continues to be present on the altar, and, during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, to offer the same blood and the same life to the same heavenly Father to secure for us individually the help we need for being saved; and hence, since the sacrifice of the Mass

is really and actually that of the cross continued, it certainly follows, that when we assist devoutly at Mass it is as if we knelt on Mount Calvary beneath the cross on which was the Saviour as our bleeding sacrificial victim. To make the children realize this, is the Sunday-school's sacred duty.

*The Children's Attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation Must be Secured.*—The children, as soon as they have come to the use of reason, are bound under pain of mortal sin to be present at Mass whenever possible on all Sundays and holydays of obligation. They should be so well instructed concerning this commandment that they can determine with reasonable correctness for themselves when they are obliged under pain of mortal sin to attend Mass, and when, by reason of some excusing cause, they may remain away without committing sin. Not only must the children be educated to know just when they are bound in conscience to attend Mass, but they must also in some way be influenced to be actually present when possible at these times.

*The Children's Attendance at Mass Should be Regular.*—It is found to be

almost impossible to secure the regular and continued attendance of the children at Mass without the parents' hearty co-operation. Hence the Sunday-school director should not fail to have the parents know and thoroughly realize, that not only are children bound under pain of mortal sin to be present at Mass when possible on Sundays and holydays of obligation, but also that parents are likewise bound under pain of mortal sin to use all reasonable means required for securing on these days the actual attendance of their own children at the Holy Sacrifice.

Merely to instruct the parents concerning the obligation of this commandment is by no means the Sunday-school's only duty. It must also endeavor as best it can to persuade them to fulfil this obligation. It must induce them to labor as one with the Church in an effort to secure their children's regular attendance at Mass. To effect this result is seldom easy. For in almost every parish there are some parents who persistently allow their children to be absent from Mass, or, as happens in many cases, discourage and even forbid their attendance. To succeed in having such children as these hear Mass

regularly is a work most difficult, and one that requires the greatest of prudence, unlimited zeal, and continual effort. Various methods have been devised for accomplishing this result, and many of these have been tried in different parishes. Some were found to be fairly successful; others would have been more so had they been systematically continued. However much these systems may differ in detail, they have essentially the same purpose, to secure the names of all the children of the parish, and then to find out on each Sunday how many of these actually attend Mass, so as to know which ones are to be encouraged to persevere in faithfulness and which are to be urged on to increased regularity. Some are succeeding admirably well in this work by giving a ticket to each child entering the church for Mass, and then by having the teachers of the several classes collect these tickets at the beginning of the Sunday-school session and keep an exact record of those who are without them and who have missed Mass on that day. From these class reports, the secretary secures a complete record of the entire school, which is systematized in due form and given to the director.

Others have preferred to dispense with Mass cards or tickets, and to have this information obtained from the various teachers, through the secretary.

During the summer time, when many of the children are visiting in various parishes on their vacation, special means have been employed to secure this record. Some have succeeded fairly well by using Mass cards. On one side of these the dates of the successive Sundays and holydays of obligation were placed in order to be punched at the door of the church. On the other side were blank forms to be signed by the priest of the parish where the child happens to be staying and to hear Mass. In a small parish, where the pastor knows each of his people thoroughly and personally, simpler methods will prove effectual. Some system, however, must be followed by those in charge for securing regular attendance, and whatever this may be it must be adapted to particular needs and local conditions. Moreover, as soon as it is found to be useless or even inferior, it must be abandoned immediately for one that is better and more effective. In some way the children must be kept continually and individually under

the watchful care and guiding influence of the priest; and they must be made to realize that the priest in all his efforts is prompted by unselfish love, and that at all times his one great purpose is to perform his duty faithfully by having each child entrusted to his care hear Mass regularly and devoutly on all Sundays and holydays of obligation.

*The Children's Attendance at Mass Should be Punctual.*—They should be so instructed as to understand clearly that in order to fulfil their obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation, and thereby to avoid mortal sin, it is necessary that they be present at the Offertory and remain until after the Communion. Moreover, every child must be brought to a thorough realization of the fact, that even if he is present at the entire part of the Mass which is required for fulfilling the precept and avoiding mortal sin, yet, if through any known and wilful fault of his, he arrives after the Mass has begun or leaves before it is entirely finished, he thereby sins venially against this precept. Hence all that lies within the power of the Sunday-school should be done to induce each child to be

punctual in his attendance at Mass and to remain until the Holy Sacrifice is finished.

*The Children Must be Educated to Hear Mass Devoutly.*—To assist at Mass is one of the holiest acts of devotion which can be offered to God. It is also one which is most pleasing in His sight and which secures from Him most abundant grace and blessing. The benefits derived from hearing Mass, however, depend in a large measure on the fervor of that personal love for Christ which we have in our soul while present. Hence those who are in charge of the Sunday-school can not be too solicitous about educating the children to hear Mass intelligently and with proper devotion.

The children should be made to realize, that whenever they set out to hear Mass they are going into the presence of Christ, to please, honor, and adore Him in obedience to His command; or, if it is not of obligation, that they are accepting His invitation and coming to be with Him during the Holy Sacrifice. If the Sunday-school has done its work, as soon as these little ones enter the door of the church a feeling of devout reverence will fill their hearts, and instinctively they will avoid all

frivolity and unnecessary conversation. In the vestibule each child should devoutly dip his fingers in the holy water and carefully make on himself the Sign of the Cross. To render his soul free from sin and pleasing in the sight of Christ, he should make from his heart an act of contrition, and with all his soul resolve for the future to avoid, as best he can, everything which he realizes to be sinful. Then, he should thoroughly realize, that provided he has perfect contrition for his mortal sins and at least imperfect contrition for those that are venial, as he steps into the church in the presence of Christ, his soul is pure and sinless. While walking down the aisle to his appointed place he should gaze at the altar, at the tabernacle wherein the Blessed Sacrament is kept, and in doing this he should know with certainty that he is gazing into the very face of Christ, who is really and truly present, rejoicing with glad heart at the approach of each friend. Before entering the pew, he should genuflect profoundly with loving adoration, bowing the head slightly and almost, if not quite, touching the floor with his knee. Having taken his proper place he should at once kneel, and

adore with all his soul Christ dwelling on the altar, and commune with Him even as if he saw Him face to face, visibly enthroned in the sanctuary. The time spent waiting for Mass to begin should be devoted to prayerful preparation, thinking of Christ, conversing with Him by means of that silent language of the heart, telling Him of life's plans and endeavors, of its trials and temptations, thanking Him for favors granted, asking His future help and guidance, and then listening lovingly, trustingly, and obediently to His words of inspiration and counsel. There is one help to devotion which no child should deliberately be without during the time of Mass, and that is a prayer-book containing suitable and soul-inspiring prayers to be said while the Holy Sacrifice is being offered. This should be found in the hands of every child, and should be used by each, at least as soon as the mind begins to wander and be occupied with other thoughts than those of Christ. Even if the child can not as yet read all the prayers, or in fact ânу of them, he can at any rate study the pictures and therein perhaps find far greater food for devotion than many glean from the printed page. These prayer-

books will serve to keep the minds of the children thinking of Christ and fill their hearts with a sweet desire to do His holy will. Moreover, they will tend to impart an ever truer knowledge of the Holy Sacrifice, and to make appreciated ever more the blessings it bestows. At least, as Christ from His altar throne gazes down upon these little ones and watches with tenderest affection their every endeavor, He will know that they are trying as best they can to show Him due homage and adoration, and His sacred Heart will be pleased with their loving reverence, and He will manifest this joy by hearing their prayers and showering on them priceless blessings. Hence if the children are well trained to use a prayer-book regularly and properly, it will be comparatively easy to educate them to hear Mass intelligently, devoutly, and with great profit to themselves. They should by no means, however, be made to feel that every moment during the Holy Sacrifice must be spent reading or using the prayer-book. This would be wrong. For if at any time they have something special to say to Christ, or if they wish to remain all absorbed in undisturbed meditation, or to hold sweet and

silent communion with their blessed Lord, they should be permitted, even counseled and encouraged to do so. But as soon as the mind ceases to be occupied with these thoughts, or begins to become distracted, then they should again and at once turn to the prayer-book and avail themselves of its afforded help and inspiration.

There is one duty most sacred, in which the priest who has charge of Sunday-school children should never be delinquent. Never under any consideration, unless unavoidable necessity requires it, should these little ones be permitted to assemble in the church for any divine service, and especially for the holy sacrifice of the Mass, without having over them some grown persons to maintain strict discipline. No frivolity or unnecessary conversation should for any reason be allowed. In some way it must be prevented. Otherwise these children will be allowed to grow up without reverence or respect for the Blessed Sacrament, and some at least will cease to believe in the Real Presence. As a result, they will inevitably drift away into infidelity, sin, and ruin. On the other hand, all possible must be done to inflame the hearts of these children with a

fervent love for Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. For unless they learn to know our divine Lord, and to love Him, and to keep themselves under His guiding influence, they can not be saved.

In effecting this desire, those who are in charge of the children should ever be mindful of the fact that they are in the church, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. All things should be done as quietly as possible, prayerfully, and, at the same time, orderly. At each of the several services, the children must be taught definitely to know how they are supposed to conduct themselves, what is best for them to do, as also the proper time for them to kneel, to be seated, to stand, and to genuflect. Not only their heartfelt prayer, but also their general deportment and their every exterior act should manifest the greatest possible homage and adoration to Christ dwelling with us on the altar as our Saviour, our God, and our All.

To educate the individual children to believe and understand rightly concerning the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and so to appreciate the blessings and graces it bestows, as to attend regularly, punctually,

and devoutly, is a work which requires from the Sunday-school long years of wise instruction and tactful training. It is a work, however, which brings these little children directly and continually nearer unto Christ and more under the sanctifying influence of His divine personality. Hence there is no doubt that the Sacred Heart of Jesus rejoices with infinite joy whenever it is being well performed by His friends and helpers in the Sunday-school.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### EDUCATING THE CHILDREN TO MAKE WORTHY CONFESSIONS

*The Children Must Understand how They Offend God by Sin.*—Deep in the soul of every child should be fostered a realization of the malice of sin and a horror for its commission. With the eyes of faith, he must behold his God ever present before him, seeing all things, knowing all things, infinitely just and good. After he has been taught to know God and to love Him, he will, at least during his better moments, earnestly desire to serve Him by doing what he really believes to be the divine command. He will live in the presence of God and strive by his life to please the Sacred Heart. In order to succeed in this, however, he must be taught definitely to know what is right and what is wrong, so that he may be trained from his earliest years to avoid what is sinful and to practise what is virtuous. Nothing possible should be left undone to save each child

from forming any habit of mortal sin. A child may be kept free from sinful habits; but after a habit of mortal sin is once formed, seldom without a miracle of grace can he be completely rescued from its thraldom. Every child, therefore, ought to be sufficiently instructed concerning the malice of sin, that he will be able to decide with reasonable accuracy in each particular case whether his sin is venial or mortal.

*The Children Should Realize the Evil and Punishment of Sin.*—Before their minds should be pictured as vividly and truthfully as possible the evil which comes from disobeying God by sin, the base ingratitude of such rebellion, the personal insult it offers to God, the friendship and love it lessens or destroys, and finally the punishment it merits in this world and especially in the next. After a child has been made to realize all this, it will not be found difficult to influence him to hate sin and to shun its temptation. Even after he has sinned mortally, he will almost at once feel repentant and, resolving to avoid this sin in the future, seek to regain the friendship and favor of God. He will turn back almost instinctively from sin,

and going to Christ ask humbly and sincerely for forgiveness.

*The Children Must Know how God's Forgiveness of Sin is to be Secured.*—As to any venial sin, they should be educated to know clearly that as soon as they are truly repentant for this, even with imperfect contrition, and firmly resolved not to commit it in the future, it is forgiven. In regard to mortal sin, the individual children should be so instructed that they will know accurately and clearly what Christ has commanded to be done in order to secure its forgiveness. Not only should they be made to realize what they must do in order to make a worthy confession and to secure as great benefits as possible from the reception of that sacrament, but they should also be brought to understand what they must do in order to make an act of perfect contrition and thereby to obtain the forgiveness of mortal sin as soon as possible after its commission. They must in some way be convinced of the fact, that even their mortal sins are forgiven as soon as they really repent from their hearts for having thus offended God, and sincerely resolve to strive in the future as best they can for the sake of Christ, to please His

sacred Heart, and never again to commit these sins or any others actually known to be mortal. Such contrition is truly perfect and, as soon as conceived, frees the soul from deadly sin. Finally, the children must be clearly taught that every mortal sin remembered to have been committed after Baptism and not told in a previous good confession, must be confessed if the sacrament of Penance would be worthily received.

*The Children Must be Prepared for Confession.*—The best time for imparting definite and practical instruction on confession to the children is when they are about to receive this sacrament. One thing must by some means be accomplished. No child should be admitted to the tribunal of Penance for confession who does not understand what the sacrament of Penance is and what he must do to receive it worthily. Especially is this true in regard to the first confession.

When the time draws near for the children's quarterly confessions, they should be assembled for instruction and instructed until every one of them understands clearly what he is about to do. So thorough should be this instruction, exam-

ination of conscience, and preparation, that each child will realize, in as far as he is capable, what it means to commit a mortal sin; what mortal sins, if any, he has committed; what venial sins he is going to tell, and what he must do in order to have all these forgiven. All this should be brought definitely and vividly before the mind of the individual child, so that after he enters the confessional he will say and do every thing necessary properly and without hesitation. The children, in ordinary cases, can be prepared for confession in this way; and there is no adequate reason why they should not be. After confession, the penance should be said, devoutly, invariably, and if possible immediately, and also heartfelt thanks should be returned to God for His merciful forgiveness.

*The Children Should be Educated to go to Confession Regularly.*—That each child who has come to the use of reason should receive the sacrament of Penance at least four times a year, no one will deny. For many, perhaps for the greater number, this may suffice, but certainly not for all. Each child should be so educated that when he realizes himself to have sinned mortally,

he will not only make at once an act of contrition as perfect as possible, but he will also go to confession at the first opportunity offered. If this were done, how few of these children would ever become enslaved by a habit of mortal sin, and consequently how few would be lost to the Church and to Christ! Regularly, therefore, at certain times appointed during the year, and especially after having certainly committed mortal sin, the individual children should be taught by the home and the Church to receive the sacrament of Penance worthily.

*The Children Should be Educated to Make Each Confession Well.*—Nothing possible should be left undone to make them realize and appreciate the fact that the more closely their contrition approaches to the absolutely perfect, the more completely are their souls freed from sin and sanctified by grace. Hence their every confession should be made as well as possible, even as if it were to be the last one before death and judgment, which actually may be the case.

*The Duty of the Sunday-School in Regard to Confession.*—Since the mission of the Sunday-school is to prepare children

for heaven, into which nothing sinful can enter, and since these little ones are living in a world of sinful temptation to which all are more or less subject, it manifestly follows that the work of keeping them free from sin and of purifying them from its defilement is one of vital importance, essentially sacred and Christlike. But no Sunday-school will succeed in this endeavor unless it follows thoroughly and rationally some systematic method. It must first find out exactly what work is to be done, and how this may be most effectively accomplished, and then it must continue to labor prudently and zealously, week after week and year after year, for its successful accomplishment.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### EDUCATING THE CHILDREN TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION

*The Children Must be Made Familiar with the Doctrines of the Holy Eucharist.* —That this sacrament is encircled by a halo of mysteries too glorious and infinite for human comprehension is most true; and yet under that lowly appearance of bread and wine dwells a Saviour who can be known and loved and served by the little children as truly as by the greatest of sages and philosophers. The one great truth which should be impressed by the Sunday-school vividly and indelibly on the mind of every child is that the Blessed Sacrament is Christ Himself, really and personally present with His body and blood, soul and divinity; in a word with His glorified, living, conscious body. From their earliest days they should be educated to realize that whenever they gaze on the Blessed Sacrament, they are gazing into the very face of Christ, the in-

carnate God, who is looking forth through the veiling appearance of bread and wine, beholding them present before Him, perceiving their thoughts and desires, and hearing their every word and prayer. This one thought should arise clearly and beautifully pictured before the mind of every child as soon as he enters into the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. All other doctrines of the Holy Eucharist will but explain who Christ really is and what He is accomplishing.

*The Children Must be Inflamed with Love for the Blessed Sacrament.*—After they have been taught to know Christ personally and to appreciate the fact that He is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, it will be found comparatively easy to inflame their hearts with love for this Saviour God who dwells with us in the Holy Eucharist. This love should be no feeble sentiment, but active and dominant, such as will induce them to strive as best they can to please the Sacred Heart by doing the divine will in all things. If the children's love for Christ is real and true, often during the week they will delight to come and visit Him, to kneel in sweet and silent prayer before the Blessed Sacra-

ment. At the services they will endeavor to be present regularly and with reverence. At the holy sacrifice of the Mass they will assist when possible with heartfelt devotion. Always will they realize that within the tabernacle dwells our God, our Saviour, our truest and best friend; and that He dwells there in the Blessed Sacrament not so much for His own honor and glory as for our salvation, to be with us, to help us in our necessities, to be offered as a victim for us in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, to enter our souls in holy communion, and to assist us on through life into heaven.

*The Children Should be Taught to Value Rightly the Grace Received in Holy Communion.*—Every grace coming from the hand of God should be prized by them at its true worth, and in as far as possible obtained through penance, prayer, and the sacraments. But in the Holy Eucharist they should realize that Christ Himself is present as the divine Saviour through whom every help and blessing is obtained. When worthily received in holy communion He enters the soul, which then becomes His living tabernacle, effulgent with the infinite beauty of His divine glory. His grace, as if it were of crimson blood, puri-

fies from stain of sin the repentant soul and gives it health and power and inspiration. By His omnipotence, Christ while dwelling within the soul transforms it into His own image and likeness. Hence the oftener we receive Him in holy communion, the more Christlike do we become in thought and desire, in life and character, the more successful in our achievement, the more certain of our salvation.

*The Children Must Know What Preparation is Required for a Worthy Communion.*—No child should be admitted to his first holy communion until he has clearly and deeply impressed on his mind exactly what preparation is absolutely necessary for receiving communion worthily. The requirements demanded by Our Lord and His Church are three: to be free from mortal sin, to be fasting from midnight, and to have the right intention. If any one has sinned mortally since his last worthy confession, he must before again receiving communion tell this with contrite heart in the tribunal of Penance and receive absolution. So thoroughly should the individual children be instructed to know this, that each child will be able to decide for himself with reasonable accuracy and at any time,

whether or not he is worthy to approach and receive his divine Saviour in communion.

*The Children Must be Prepared for Receiving Holy Communion Well.*—Not only should they be familiar with the catechism and thoroughly instructed in Christian doctrine, especially in the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, but they should also make a proximate preparation to dispose them well for the reception of this Most Holy Sacrament. In the case of their first communion, this is done by means of a specially prepared course of instruction and of a well conducted retreat. As to their subsequent communions, however, they are generally left almost entirely to their own effort and resource. Hence arises the necessity of educating them in the Sunday-school to know definitely which manner of receiving holy communion is best and most fruitful, and then of training them year after year to communicate in this way. When preparing for communion they should be taught to keep devoutly before their minds by prayerful consideration the fact that Christ is about to enter their souls. This thought will serve to induce them to prepare well for His coming.

If possible they should assist devoutly at Mass, and by all means make use of a prayer-book to keep their minds meditating on Christ, to make them realize more thoroughly whom they are about to receive and for what graces they should ask, to inspire their souls with devotion, and to inflame their hearts with sanctifying love. Reverently should they approach and with devout love should they receive Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and then, forgetting all else, they should return to their places and adore our blessed Lord with heartfelt, joyous praise. At this time, above all others, should special favors be sought, needed graces implored, and fervent thanksgiving rendered for every good gift received, but especially for this, the best. Finally, the children should go their way firmly resolved so to live, that Christ will continue to dwell spiritually in their souls, wielding therein a Christianizing influence, and enabling them so to act that they will be worthy soon to receive Him again, and that each communion received will be even holier than the last.

*The Children Should be Educated to Communicate Frequently.*—No work of the Sunday-school is of more vital impor-

tance or of stricter obligation than this; none is more meritorious in the sight of God and more pleasing to the Sacred Heart. All the instruction of the Sunday-school and all the activity of its members should be directed to the accomplishment of this one crowning work, preparing and disposing the young to receive holy communion worthily and frequently. In as far as it succeeds in this one thing, all else, through the grace and co-operation of Christ, shall certainly follow. For every one who receives holy communion worthily and frequently performs his daily duties, lives a Catholic life, and thereby makes his salvation certain. Moreover, during each day of his life, he merits for himself additional joy and glory in heaven. If the children would be saved, therefore, and if the Church would quickly conquer the entire world and bring all into one fold and unto one Lord, the young must be thoroughly educated in the practice of receiving holy communion worthily and frequently.

*This Should be the Sunday-School's Chief Endeavor.*—Since the sole mission of the Sunday-school is to prepare its

members for heaven by educating them to live according to the will of God, and since there is but One through whom they will be disposed and enabled to live such a life, and that One is Christ, really and personally present in the Blessed Sacrament, it is manifest that if the Sunday-school would succeed in its work it must not only instruct them thoroughly in Christ's doctrine and persuade them to believe His truth, but it must also keep them under the influence of His divine power by inducing them to receive holy communion worthily and frequently, and thereby to be disposed and enabled by divine grace to fashion their lives according to His holy will. In some way the Sunday-school must bring the individual children to realize and appreciate the fact that Christ lived and died to save them, that He loves each of them with an infinite love and that He yearns with an infinite desire to have each of them saved. For this purpose He has given Himself in the Blessed Sacrament to be their spiritual food, to heal the infirmity of sin, to guide their way, to protect them from evil, to render them victorious over temptation, to make them successful

in life's endeavor, to bring them safely into heaven, and thus to have them with Himself present before His throne, enjoying beatific delight forever. Hence in no way can the children give greater joy to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, secure more abundant graces for themselves, promote more truly their own success in life, make their salvation more certain, and their eternal happiness and glory greater than by receiving Christ, the incarnate God, frequently and worthily in holy communion. At each additional communion, worthily received, Christ sanctifies the soul more from the defilement of sin, gives it increased power and perfection, and transforms it ever more into the image and likeness of His own beauty and divinity. Hence those who receive holy communion most worthily and frequently during life shall be most like unto Christ in heaven, shall behold with clearest vision the truth eternal, shall thrill with the intensest joy beatific, shall wield the greatest power for good, shall shine most resplendently with beauteous glory, and shall be nearest unto the great white throne forever.

To educate the children, therefore, so that they will receive holy communion worthily and frequently throughout life, is the Sunday-school's crowning achievement, its all important mission, its joy and supreme glory.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### EDUCATING THE CHILDREN TO FOLLOW THEIR VOCATION

God not only made all creatures from nothing, but He assigned to each a certain reason of existence, a certain part to be taken in the activity of the created universe. For each person, He marked out a particular mission in life; and, while we are striving as best we can to fulfil this mission according to His divine will, we are succeeding best in serving and pleasing Him, in preparing ourselves for heaven, in increasing our sanctification and, consequently, our eternal glory.

*God Gives to Each Person a Special Vocation.*—By a vocation is meant a divine call either to remain in the state of life in which we are already living and to discharge rightly its proper duties, or else to enter some different state of life and to fulfil faithfully the obligations it imposes. The various states of life to which we are called are certain fixed manners of living,

or of serving as instruments in the hands of God to effect the designs of His providence.

God has a special plan in regard to each of us; to each He gives a vocation. "Each has his proper gift from God," says St. Paul," one after this manner and one after that." In explaining these words, Cornelius á Lapide gives us the following exegesis: "God gives to every one his vocation. He chooses the state in which He wishes Himself to be served by each, and He prepares for each the efficacious grace required to enable him to live in that particular state to which he has been called and to be saved." This grace, however, is offered to us conditionally; on condition that we live in the state of life to which He has called us. When we fail to do this, we frustrate the kind intentions of God in our behalf, we deprive ourselves of that helping grace which He has prepared for us, and as a result we find it more difficult to keep from sin and to gain heaven. Hence to choose and to live in the right state of life, the one to which God has called us, is for each person a matter of supreme and eternal importance. This fact should be well remembered by pastors

and spiritual advisers, and should receive their most serious and prayerful attention. In as far as lies within their power, they should educate those entrusted to their charge to know the various states of life, and they should induce these persons. both young and old, to follow that vocation which they have received, to live as Christians in the state of life to which they have been called, to avail themselves of all the graces offered, and to discharge faithfully the duties therein imposed.

*Different States of Life Are Designed for Different Persons.*—Theologians in general are agreed that the various states of life to at least one of which all persons are individually called are four in number; namely, virginity, matrimony, the religious state, and the priesthood.

1. Virginity. All who have not as yet attained the proper age for matrimony, or who are entirely unfitted for it by some disqualification, are called to remain in the state of virginity. Moreover, even among the marriageable, many are found who have a true vocation from God to continue living the virgin life. This vocation should by no one be despised. It should be esteemed as a special blessing from

heaven. For the Church teaches as infallible truth that the state of virginity is more perfect and pleasing in the sight of God than that of matrimony. The Council of Trent has declared this doctrine to be a dogma of faith. "If any one shall say," decrees this council, "that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in the state of virginity or celibacy, than to be joined in matrimony, let him be anathema."

While directing the young in regard to this vocation, however, one thing should be kept clearly and constantly before the mind of the priest; namely, not all who are living the single life have been called to the state of virginity. On the contrary, many of these have been called to the marriage state, but for one reason or another are neglecting to follow their vocation, and instead of saving their souls by doing God's will they are living lives of sin and immorality. If the priest would accomplish any thing permanent in his endeavor to save these, he must first induce them to enter that state to which they have been called. Those only should continue living

the single life who feel convinced that God wills them to live in virginity.

2. Matrimony. By far the greater number of adults are called to live in this state; and this vocation, coming as it does from God, should be followed by all to whom it is given. Failure to do this has brought ruin, material and spiritual, into many a life, and caused the eternal loss of many souls. To prevent this evil as best it can be done is the bounden duty of every priest to whom a pastoral charge has been entrusted. He must instruct his people, especially the young, as soon as they have arrived at a proper age, concerning this vocation. He must induce them to consult God seriously and prayerfully in order to discover the particular state of life to which they are individually called. He must persuade them to follow their vocation at any cost, to do the will of God as manifest, and, through the aid of special graces given, to fulfil as practical Catholics all obligations imposed. While endeavoring to do this, he should remember that he is merely obeying Christ, laboring with Him to further the true welfare of the individual, the State, and the Church. Vitally and su-

premely important is this work. For no reason should it be voluntarily neglected.

3. The Religious State. More perfect than matrimony or even than virginity is the state of religion. The call to this life comes truly from Christ, not in the sense that He makes it imperative, but He recommends or counsels it for some few chosen souls as a means of advancing to greater perfection and usefulness and glory. Those who are responsive to this vocation leave all for the sake of following, loving, and serving Christ. More than this, in order that their abandonment of worldly advantage and selfish interest may be complete and permanent, on entering the religious life they bind themselves by vow to observe the three evangelical counsels; namely, poverty, chastity, and obedience.

In taking these vows, they act from wise and salutary motives. They choose a life of voluntary poverty so that, being freed from the engrossing cares of earthly possession and wealth, as also from the alluring temptations of avarice, they may love with undivided affection Christ their God. As a reward for this sacrifice made for the sake of their beloved One, they

"shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting" (*Matt.* xix, 29). They voluntarily abstain from marriage and live a life of virginity so that they may be more pleasing in the sight of God and may devote themselves entirely to His service. With Christlike obedience, free and entire, they submit to the will of their superiors in all that is not sin, so that by the command of these, as by the voice of God, they may be directed to do in all things the will of their heavenly Father.

*The Life of a Religious is One of Supreme Joy and Blessing.*—Why do people leave the world and enter the religious state? Some, because they have grown tired of the world's care and turmoil, and wish to live the remainder of their lives in homes of peace and delightful devotion. Others, because by ardent love for Christ they are drawn almost irresistibly to live in His presence, near to His altar throne, and to consecrate their lives to His love, service, and adoration. By far the greater number of religious, however, are living that life not only because it makes their own salvation more certain and their sanctification more Christlike, but also because it enables them to labor

more effectively in the work of saving and sanctifying others. Excepting the priests of the Catholic Church, no class of persons living on earth have done more to save people from sin and ruin, and to increase their sanctity here and their glory hereafter than the religious. Through the zealous endeavor of religious brothers and sisters, millions of children are being saved to the Church and to God, and other millions are being educated to live holier and more Christlike lives. More than this, our Catholic schools and the children who attend them are wielding an irresistible Christianizing influence over the homes and over the communities at large, such as is turning the minds and the hearts of the people daily more and more unto Christ and His holy Church, and the sanctifying power for good thereby exerted will continue with increasing force down through the countless generations of the future.

A beautiful illustration of this is found in the life of Mother Caroline of Milwaukee. In her biography we read: "It was, above all, her ardent, faith-inspired love of children that gained their hearts and exercised an irresistible influence over

their affections. Thus did she unconsciously attract young girls, and inspire them with a wish to become Sisters." As a result, the number of persons attracted by her to the religious state undoubtedly reached the hundreds; while the number which her spiritual children have drawn to religion is, even at the present time, far greater.

Besides the teaching communities, there are others which devote their self-sacrificing endeavor to works of charity and mercy in hospitals and asylums. Here by their kindly treatment of the afflicted, by their hopeful words and prayerful hearts, they are instrumental in reforming almost countless lives and in saving a vast number of souls.

The graces and blessings of the true religious are innumerable. St. Bernard mentions a few: "They live more purely; they fall more rarely; they rise more speedily; they are aided more powerfully; they live more peacefully; they die more securely; and they are rewarded more abundantly." St. Augustine, speaking of the religious life, declares: "Yes; I have been passionately fond of the perfection of the evangelical counsels; with God's grace

I have embraced them. With all the power I have, I exhort others to do the same; and I have companions whom I have succeeded in persuading." These should be the sentiments, and this the endeavor of every religious, and especially of every priest who has at heart the welfare of the Church and the salvation and sanctification of his fellow men.

*A Vocation to the Religious Life Should not be Neglected.*—It should be followed promptly and according to God's manifest will. "When God gives such vocations," says St. John Chrysostom, as quoted by St. Thomas, "He wills that we should not defer even for a moment to follow them; for, when the devil can not bring a person to give up his resolution of consecrating himself to God, he at least seeks to make him defer the execution of it; and he esteems it a great gain if he can obtain the delay of one day, or even of one hour." "Because," continues St. Liguori, "after that day, or that hour, other occasions presenting themselves, it will be less difficult for the devil to obtain greater delay, until the person, finding himself more feeble, and less assisted by grace, gives way altogether, and loses his vocation."

*Parents Should Foster the Vocations of Their Children to the Religious Life.*— Such a vocation comes from God as a blessing, and therefore is to be accepted by the parents submissively and even joyfully. Every encouragement should be given and every possible help offered which will serve to induce and enable those called to do the will of God as manifest. They need this help. No matter how good their disposition may be or how noble their character, they are nevertheless most changeable and most easily inclined by every influence. They must be saved from sin, sanctified by grace, educated in divine truth, and confirmed in Christian virtue. Their vocations must be preserved and fostered and followed. In as far as parents realize their duty in this and voluntarily neglect to fulfil it, they become responsible before God, not only for their own children, but also for the innumerable souls which these would directly or indirectly save. In regard to the sinfulness of such conduct, St. Liguori gives the following doctrine as taught by theologians in general: "Parents, who without a just and certain cause, prevent their children from entering the religious state, can not be excused from

mortal sin; and not only parents, but any one who prevents another from following a religious vocation, sins mortally."

In no case have parents any right to prevent their child from following a true vocation, and even if they strive to do this the child is not bound to obey their command or to observe their prohibition. When there is question of conflicting injunctions, God is to be obeyed rather than parents.

*Pastors Should Encourage Religious Vocations.*—Every priest entrusted with the care of souls should find out those who manifest aptitude for the religious life, and should seek so to dispose and sanctify them that the desired call may be given and followed. When he finds one who evidently has a true vocation, he should see that this vocation is followed with scrupulous exactness. Moreover, he should make his people thoroughly familiar with the motives, the principles, and the blessings of the religious life; and he should induce them, not only to join as one in prayer to the Lord that He may send more laborers into His harvest, but also with united effort to encourage and assist in every way possible those who are called to follow the vocations given.

4. The Priesthood. So fundamentally and essentially important to the Church and its individual members is a right understanding and appreciation of this state of life, that a special chapter will be devoted solely to its consideration.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### FOSTERING VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

*The Work of Salvation is the Work of Christ.*—Before His death, He accomplished all chiefly through Himself. After His ascension, He chose to use the members of His Church as instruments to cooperate with Him in His endeavor to save and sanctify the human race. Of this work, each Catholic has a part. No one is exempt from the obligation of assisting in maintaining and establishing Christ's kingdom on earth. There are in the Church, however, many special duties, such as teaching and directing the faithful and administering the sacraments. For the performance of these duties, He has selected certain persons and called them to consecrate their lives and to devote their entire efforts to His service. He has given to these favored ones a vocation to the priesthood.

*The Priesthood Was Instituted by Christ*

*Himself.*—From the multitude that followed Him, He chose His apostles. At the Last Supper He ordained them priests to offer sacrifice. After His resurrection He commissioned them to go forth and to teach and sanctify all nations. He promised to be with them all days, even to the consummation of the world. The priesthood, therefore, will continue to exist on earth till the last day. Without it, the holy sacrifice of the Mass would not be offered, the sacraments would not be administered, the word of God would not be preached to the faithful, and the true religion would soon disappear. It is principally through the priesthood that Christ continues to maintain and establish His kingdom; and it is through those who have entered this state, that is, through the priests of His holy Church, that He is accomplishing His greatest achievements in the work of salvation and sanctification. Truly have they been called other Christs, for none are more Christlike in the duties to be performed, or in dignity or in power than the duly ordained priest.

*To Enter the Priesthood a Special Vocation is Necessary.*—Referring to the priesthood, St. Paul says: "Neither doth

any man take the honor to himself, but he that was called by God, as Aaron was." Christ, speaking of this, said to His apostles: "You have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain."

Christ gives a special vocation to those whom He wills to enter the priesthood. He knows perfectly what work is to be done, and by whom He has designed it to be accomplished. He calls these particular persons in preference to others to come and follow Him, to leave all things, and to co-operate with Him in the work of His kingdom. If they heed His call, and strive as best they can to do His will, then He invariably gives all graces needed to enable them to perform the duties imposed exactly as He desires these to be done, and He is with them at all times prompting, directing, assisting, and crowning their endeavor with success.

*No One Should Enter the Priesthood Without Such a Vocation.*—So holy should be the life of a priest, so entirely should it be consecrated to the service of Christ, so numerous and sacred are its duties, so perilous and incessant are the dangers

which beset the way, that no one should presume to live this life unless he feels certain that he has received a special call, and therefore has been promised the needed grace. From experience, however, it is sometimes found that, for one reason or another, young men who manifestly have no vocation enter the seminary and pursue their studies for the priesthood. These make a sad and often an irreparable mistake. They may not realize this until it is too late; or if they do realize it, prevailing influences and conditions may induce them not to turn back, but recklessly to continue on heedless of consequence. As a result lives, which, if lived in the world, might have been successful, honorable, and Catholic, are wrecked, rendered not only useless, but, perhaps, disgracefully degrading; and all this simply because these persons started out in life on the wrong career and either did not have sense enough to discover their mistake, or else sufficient moral courage to turn back and live as God had intended. It has been said, and with reason, that far more harm is done to the Church by ordaining one bad priest, than by keeping from the seminary ten who would be worthy.

Hence no young man who has any habit of mortal sin which he will not and does not break up, should be encouraged to study for the priesthood or should be allowed to receive Holy Orders. In fact, it is most unwise, even wrong, to encourage anyone to aspire to the priesthood whose character is not thoroughly known and whose worthiness is not reasonably certain.

*A Vocation to the Priesthood May be Lost.*—Of this there is no doubt. Whenever this happens, Christ's design in regard to the individual is frustrated, much of His work is left undone, and, consequently, many souls are in all probability lost. This should not occur, and in many cases it would not occur if priests and parents would awake from their indifference and want of zeal and exert themselves as they should in discovering and fostering the vocations of those under their charge. When a true vocation has been given, it should be recognized and preserved as such.

*The Reality of This Vocation Must be Determined.*—How can we most surely find out whether a vocation to the priesthood is truly from Christ or not? Those most thoroughly versed in this subject usually

give as certain marks of a true vocation three qualifications; namely, the necessary ability, a sincere desire, and a pure intention.

1. The Necessary Ability. No one can reasonably be supposed to have a vocation to the priesthood unless he possesses the ability necessarily required for performing efficiently its proper duties. It is true, Christ's power is infinite, and hence He could accomplish any purpose as successfully through the most defective of instruments as through the noblest and best. Still, ordinarily speaking, this is not His way. He chooses for His work those who, considering all things, are best qualified and disposed. Recognizing this fact, the Church has in its canon law definite rules which prohibit certain persons from receiving Holy Orders. The reason is that it wishes to procure for the service of Christ the best available material and talent, the perfection of true manhood. That its legislation was guided by the Spirit of God, there is no doubt; and hence the prudent pastor will follow this wisely. He will not, however, reject at once all to whom the disqualifying laws of the Church apply, but he will demand from each of

these some extraordinary evidence of a true vocation.

The ability required is physical, intellectual, and moral. Physically, the one aspiring to the priesthood should be able to perform properly and becomingly all necessary duties. As to intellectual requirements, he should have sufficient talent to be able to qualify himself thoroughly for his work and to accomplish this efficiently. This principle, however, should not be too rigorously applied. Some who were termed dull in the grammar school, have made a creditable showing in the college and seminary; and some who were considered "*minus habens*" as students, have accomplished great and lasting achievement in the work of salvation. Of such was the Curé of Ars. Even the great theologian, Suarez, belonged to the same class. So intellectually deficient was he considered to be by his superiors, that the advisability of promoting him to Holy Orders was called into serious doubt. Many other examples might be given; and yet, they are but exceptions. Generally speaking, the principle given above is to be followed as true.

This intellectual ability required need

not necessarily be extraordinarily great; but there is one quality which above all it should possess, namely, common sense. Cardinal Gibbons, in the "Ambassador of Christ," most truly says: "Experience shows that solid judgment, with moderate though sufficient attainment, is far more serviceable to religion than brilliant talents combined with a deficiency in practical sense. The occasions for the display of genius are rare; the opportunities for the exercise of mother-wit and discretion occur every hour of the day. Archbishop Spalding, whenever a student applied for adoption into his archdiocese, was accustomed to make this inquiry concerning him, 'Has he common sense?'

"If the foregoing qualities of mind are supplemented by earnestness of manner, by force of character, strength of will, tenacity of purpose, and by a serious view of the path of duty that lies before him, the devout student will have a well-grounded hope to become a 'fit minister of the New Covenant.' "

Far more important than physical aptitude or intellectual ability, however, is a proper moral qualification. When considering the moral fitness of one aspiring to

the priesthood, the law of heredity should be taken into serious account. "If you wish to raise a good boy, you must commence with the grandmother," says an old proverb. Too little attention is given to this fact by the generality of people. We need, above all, saintly persons in the priesthood, and boys are seldom more saintly than their mothers. Hence the children of parents who are given to immorality or drunkenness, or even to excessive worldliness, seldom have true religious vocations. If the parents, however, especially the mother, are more than ordinarily Catholic in life, and if the boy or young man who aspires to the priesthood is himself living a life virtuous above suspicion and devoutly prayerful, then it is only just to believe that his vocation is truly from God.

2. A Sincere Desire. No one should be advanced to Holy Orders who has not a sincere desire to receive that sacrament. This desire, moreover, should be no mere spasmodic act of the will, felt only on impressive and inspiring occasions. It must be an abiding inclination of the soul toward the priesthood, with a yearning to enter that state and to perform its duties.

Those who feel such a desire should be filled with the sentiments of Saul and eagerly ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?"

3. A Pure Intention. The desire to enter the priesthood which is required for a true vocation is not only real and abiding, but it also springs from a pure intention. It is a heavenly affection for Christ, with an ardent desire to procure the salvation of souls and the glory of God by laboring in His service and for His Church. The one who feels no desire such as this, who finds no delight in retirement, in study, prayer, and devotion, who has no personal love for Christ and no zeal for His holy cause, may with just reason be said to have no vocation from God. If he is actuated by any real desire, it is generally by the spirit of avarice or of unlawful ambition, and no prudent priest will give the least encouragement to his aspirations.

But there is no need of questioning the vocation of one whose parents are practically religious and whose own life is consistently Catholic, who is free from habit of mortal sin and earnestly striving to avoid even those which are venial, who shuns the occasion of sin and detests all

vileness of speech, who is careful about prayer, loves to be present at Mass, especially to serve it, and to receive the sacraments frequently, who finds delight in the reading of Catholic books and stories, whose heart swells with emotion as he learns of heroic deeds done by those who have sacrificed all for the cause of Christ, who yearns to do at least something in the work of establishing Christ's kingdom in the souls of all, who regards the priesthood as a state in which more can be accomplished for the salvation of man, for personal sanctification, and for the glory of God than in any other, who "would choose to be an abject in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacle of sinners," and who feels with certain conviction that he has received a divine call to come and follow the Saviour by leading the priestly life. The one who has a character of this kind and is living in this manner, who is imbued with these sentiments and prompted by these motives to consecrate his entire being to the service of Christ, has, beyond all shadow of doubt, a true vocation from God.

Such a call comes immediately from on high and such dispositions, at least in their

germinal state, are implanted in the soul by the divine hand. Those who are chosen, however, may remain even for years unconscious of their vocation, although during all this time God may be directing their endeavor to its fulfilment, using as secondary agents pastors, parents, associates, and Christianizing influences, to foster the germs of sanctity implanted, to dispose these chosen ones rightly for following the call given, and to qualify them for the faithful performance of the priesthood's sacred duties.

*Vocations to the Priesthood Should be Discovered and Fostered.*—How may this best be done? Since at the present time "the harvest is great, but the laborers are few," that is, priests are unable to accomplish all the work of salvation which is to be done, and since, as a consequence, many souls are being lost to the Church and to Christ, it necessarily follows that this question is one of vital and supreme importance. Many answers have been given, but none, perhaps, which appeal more strongly, especially to us Americans, than that of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. While treating of this subject it gave the following most practical, and

at the same time, most inspiring exhortation:

"Since a priest usually is, in after life, what he gave promise of becoming in youth, it is certainly of great importance that the future ministers of the Church, from their tenderest years, should be well grounded in piety and learning by the most careful study. Wherefore we exhort in the Lord and earnestly entreat pastors and other priests that they diligently devote their attention to the boys committed to their care, searching after and finding out such as are fit for the ecclesiastical state and seem to be called to it. If they find any boys of good disposition, of pious inclination, of devout and generous minds, who are able to learn, and of whom it may be reasonably hoped that they will serve God continually in the sacred ministry, they should nourish the zeal of such; they should assiduously foster these precious germs of vocation; out of paternal charity they should instruct these boys in piety and in the elements of knowledge, incite them to study, and solicitously shield them from the contagion of the world; they should admonish the parents to incline religiously toward the ecclesiastical state

their sons who show signs of a religious vocation. Finally priests should endeavor to remove those obstacles which often arise from the poverty of the family."

1. In following these instructions, it should be borne clearly in mind that, as a general rule, these young persons are not supposed to know with any kind of certainty whether they are called to the religious life or not. They should be directed in their decision by the wise counsel of some zealous, experienced priest or confessor. No priest should attempt to fulfill this duty, however, unless he knows definitely how to discern the true marks of a divine vocation.

2. In brief, these are a "good disposition, pious inclination, devout and generous mind, and an ability to learn." In other words, the aspirant to the priesthood should have a "good disposition"; that is, he should be descended from virtuous parents. He should have "a pious inclination"; that is, he should be free from vicious, or at least mortally sinful habits and living a life Catholic above suspicion. He should have "a generous mind"; that is, he should delight in prayer and in the frequent reception of holy communion; he

should be willing to labor for the cause of Christ, and even anxious to do things heroic for man's salvation and God's glory. He should have "an ability to learn," such as will enable him to qualify himself adequately for the efficient accomplishment of the priesthood's proper work. If the vocation is truly divine and present, these qualities are certainly possessed and discernible; and those having them may be justly regarded as fit for the priesthood.

3. The true and zealous priest will not only find out those who are called to this life, but he will also devote to them special care. He will make their personal acquaintance, win their confidence, talk with them privately but informally about future plans, inspire and encourage good endeavor, and lead them on to the accomplishment of Christ's design in their regard. More than this, he will bring them to realize their true relation to God, that God chooses them from among the people and calls them to a special work, not because of their own natural excellency, but out of loving condescension, and that this call, being a true vocation, must be followed at any cost and in strict

accord with the divine will. Even more, he will induce them to esteem their vocation as the greatest blessing they could receive, and so to treasure this that it will not be lost. To render their vocation more certainly secure, he will persuade them to associate with the best of companions, to read the most Catholic of literature, to be prayerful in life with special and tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, to assist at Mass not only on Sundays and holydays, but whenever they can, and above all to receive holy communion as frequently and fervently as possible.

4. He will strive, as best he can, to protect those who have a vocation to the priesthood from the contagion of sin and the peril of its influence. If he fails to do this, his other endeavors will prove fruitless. For unless the passionate fondness of our young people for society and their ravenous appetite for reading are rightly controlled and directed, they will lead to loss of vocation, and in some cases to spiritual ruin. No matter how noble the youth may be or how Christlike in his ways, the long continued influence of evil companions and literature will slowly but

surely change his life into the image and likeness of their own ideal.

5. The education of those aspiring to the priesthood must be rightly conducted and directed. Their studies should be such as will best prepare them for life's future work. The school which they attend should be the most efficient and most thoroughly Catholic available. Its very atmosphere should be congenial and conducive to the formation of the priestly life.

6. The parents should be brought to cooperate with the priest in the work of fostering vocations to the priesthood. They should be zealously and regularly admonished that any child of theirs who has a vocation should be religiously inclined and judiciously encouraged to follow it. Too often do priests fail in this duty, and parents remain as if unmindful of its obligation. Consequently, the number of those who at the present time are entering the priesthood is lamentably small. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, dwelling at length on this point, says: "We fear that the fault lies in great part with many parents who, instead of fostering the desire, so natural to the young heart, of dedica-

ting itself to the sanctuary, but too often impart to their children their own worldly-mindedness, and seek to influence their choice of a state of life by unduly exaggerating the difficulties and dangers of the priestly calling, and painting in too glowing colors the advantages of a secular life. To such parents we would most earnestly appeal, imploring them not to interfere with the designs of God on their children, when they perceive in them a growing disposition to attach themselves to the service of the altar.

"If God rewards the youthful piety of your sons by calling them to minister in His sanctuary, the highest privilege He confers on man, do not endeavor to give their thought another direction. Do not present to your children the priesthood in any other light than as a sublime state, having, indeed, most sacred duties and most serious obligations, but also having the promise of God's grace to strengthen and sustain human weakness in their fulfilment, and the divine blessing here and hereafter as a reward. To those whom God invites to co-operate with Him in the most sublime of all works, the salvation of souls, the words of Christ to His apostles

are applicable: 'Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of His Majesty, you also shall sit on the twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and every one that hath left home, or brothers and sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.' "

There is no doubt that inestimable good would be accomplished if during the year each pastor would give a formal sermon on the question of vocation, as also on the dignity and blessing of the priestly and religious life. If this were done, the admonitions of the council quoted would be effectively brought home both to parents and children and made productive of great and eternal good.

7. Financial aid, when needed, should be afforded to those having a true vocation. The priest should manage in some way to have removed every obstacle arising from poverty which would prevent those certainly called to the religious life from following their vocation. The Church from the beginning has been established and maintained largely through the

labors and self-sacrifice of the poor. They have been its most efficient workers and have accomplished its greatest achievements. Hence the Church should not permit poverty, or want of material means to discourage or prevent any one from following his vocation to the priesthood. In each particular case, if God gives the vocation, He will likewise make it possible for this to be followed. The financial aid required can by some means be secured. This means should be discovered by the priest. He should willingly co-operate with God in this work. Generally, if rightly appealed to, the family and relatives, or at least friends and fellow parishioners, will gladly join in giving all needed assistance.

8. The priest should attract others to the priesthood by his own personality. He should strive to live a life so truly Christlike that his character will be manifest as being beautifully and delightfully Catholic. The young love to see realized in themselves an ideal. Hence there is no doubt that the number of those entering the priesthood would be doubled, even trebled, if we who are now living the priestly life would endeavor scrupulously and contin-

ually to live before God and man as "other Christs." Then the young would be filled with respect, reverence, and love for the priest and his sacred office; and, drawn by personal attraction, they would feel a yearning desire to become like unto us.

9. The priest should pray that vocations be given to those who are worthy. "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest." These are the words of Christ, and the zealous priest will not permit them to pass unnoticed. He will pray for this intention frequently, fervently, and devoutly, especially during the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Even more, he will exhort the faithful to join with him in this prayer, supplicating God that vocations be given to their children and followed until death with truest fidelity.

*The Fostering of Vocations is a Work Fraught with Countless Blessings.*—There is no work more meritorious than this, none more productive of vast and eternal good, and none which gives greater joy and consolation. Words can not adequately express the real satisfaction and happi-

ness, honor and eternal glory, given to those who labor faithfully in the work of preserving and fostering vocations to the religious life, and especially to the priesthood.

When speaking of this subject, Archbishop Lynch of Toronto used to say: "The average priest secures the salvation of five thousand souls." The more thoroughly and minutely this statement is examined, the more manifest becomes its truthfulness. Hence the priest who secures but one successor to his sacred office has a perennial source of hope and consolation during his declining years, such as is particularly inspiring at the moment of death. But, why should any priest rest content with having secured one? The more the better. It is related of an aged and venerable priest of Orleans, France, that when about to die he gave expression to this beautiful thought: "I am eighty-three and shall soon die. I have not done all the good I would, but one thing consoles me—I leave after me thirty-three priests whom I have formed to the ecclesiastical state; they will do better than I have done."

Some years later, one of these thirty-three, on the occasion of his silver jubilee

to the priesthood, had gathered around him twenty-five other priests, whose vocations to the religious state he in turn had fostered. To him his pastor had said on the day of ordination: "Always have pupils in your presbytery; you will be their angel, and they will be yours." (Quest. on Vocations.) Would that God might inspire more to emulate the zeal of such priests as these.

Comparatively few dioceses can be found which are not in actual need of more religious workers who have consecrated their lives to the service of Christ. Pastors are petitioning the various religious communities for Sisters and Brothers to teach in the parish schools. Bishops, especially those of the West and South, as also of our newly acquired possessions in the Orient, are appealing for priests to take charge of missionary work. "Send us priests, wise, zealous, holy priests," comes as a cry almost universal. Vast multitudes in every land are groping amid the darkness of error and in the shadows of death, seeking for some one to lead them forth into the light of truth and unto the life of Christ. This need is both instant and imperative, and unless there are

found some followers of Christ, ardently devoted to His Church and nobly obedient to His call, who will voluntarily offer themselves for this service and consecrate their lives to this endeavor, these benighted ones, so unfortunate in their error, so well disposed for the right, so precious in the sight of God, will continue, in all probability, to search in vain for the way of salvation; and at least many of them, will be lost. "The harvest indeed is great but the laborers are few." The work to be done is the work of Christ. He is present all days, directing and assisting and blessing. He calls for help. He chooses some favored ones from among His followers and commands them to go forth into the highways and byways and search out laborers and bring them into His vineyard. Some are found who leave this command practically unheeded, not from malice, but rather because they do not thoroughly realize how intense is the desire of Christ for additional laborers in His work and how dire is the need of the Church at the present time for their consecrated service. Thrice blessed, therefore, and well assured of eternal happiness is the priest who can truthfully say at the hour of death: "I shall

soon die; I have not done all the good I would, but one thing consoles me—I leave after me others whom I have formed to the priestly life; they will do better than I have done."

# APPENDIX

## ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF PIUS X, BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE POPE

### TO THE BISHOPS OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH ON THE TEACHING OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

*To His Venerable Brothers, the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other Ordinaries having peace and union with the Apostolic See, Pius P. P. X. sends Greeting and Benediction.*

VENERABLE BROTHERS:

In this extremely distressing and difficult time, the hidden designs of God have imposed on our slender strength the office of Supreme Pastor over the universal flock of Christ. The hardship is great, because the enemy has long been prowling around the flock and with subtile cunning has endeavored to bring havoc upon it, succeeding to such an extent that more than ever, what the Apostle wrote to the ancients of the Church of Ephesus, seems to be real-

ized: "I know that ravening wolves will enter among you, not sparing the flock" (*Acts* xx. 29).

Those among us who are prompted by zeal for the glory of God and who seek the reasons for the present decay of religion, ascribe it to various causes; and each, according to his own views, adopts different methods in the endeavor to protect and restore the kingdom of God on earth. To Us, Venerable Brethren, without rejecting the opinions of others, it seems that we must agree with the judgment of those who attribute the remissness, or rather the intellectual debility of our times, as the condition from which such grave evils arise, chiefly to ignorance of divine things. There seems to be in our day a recurrence of what God said by the mouth of the Prophet Oseas: "There is no knowledge of God in the land. Cursing and lying and killing and theft have overflowed, and blood hath touched blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth in it shall languish" (*Osee* iv. 1–3).

In fact, in our age it is a common and alas! not an unjust complaint, that there are a great many Christian people who are

in the densest ignorance about what concerns their eternal salvation. When we say Christian people, we do not refer to the humbler classes, who often may find an excuse for their ignorance in the fact that the hard rule of their harsh masters does not leave them the opportunity to attend to themselves or the disposal of their time. We speak rather and especially of those who are not lacking in intellectual culture, nay, who are often notably conspicuous for their knowledge of profane science, but who pass their lives in thoughtless unconcern about religious matters. It is difficult to describe the dense darkness in which these are involved, and, what is worse, the heedlessness in which they live. Of God, the Supreme Ruler and Author of all things, and of the teaching of Christianity, they have no thought whatever. They know nothing of the Incarnation; nothing of God's perfect renovation of the human race; nothing of grace, which is especially required for the attainment of things eternal; nothing of the august sacrifice of the Mass, or of the sacraments by which we acquire and retain divine grace. Of the wickedness and foulness of sin they have no appreciation, and hence no care to

avoid or to withdraw from it. They arrive even at the portals of death in such a condition that the priest, instead of devoting those last moments to fostering sentiments of love of God in the soul, is compelled, in order not to dispel all hope of salvation, to sum up and teach the very elements of religious truth. Often, it is not even thus; and, as too frequently happens, the dying man, in his reprehensible ignorance, regards the ministrations of the priest as unnecessary, and persuades himself that with tranquil mind he can enter on the dreadful road to eternity and face the anger of God, whom he has not thought it necessary to propitiate. Fittingly has it been said by Our Predecessor, Benedict XIV: "We declare, that the greater part of those who are eternally lost, have brought this calamity on themselves by their ignorance of those mysteries of faith which they should have known and believed in order to be united with the elect."

Hence, Venerable Brothers, why should we wonder that not only among savage people, but even in those nations which are still spoken of as being Christian, there should be such widespread and ever in-

creasing corruption of morals and such depravity of life? The Apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesians, said: "Fornication, and all uncleanness and covetousness, let it not be so much as named among you, as becomes saints; or obscenity or foolish talking" (*Eph.* v. 3, 4).

Now, the foundation of this holiness and purity of soul, which are to hold evil desires in check, is, as the Apostle declared, the knowledge of divine things: "See, therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise. Therefore become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God" (*Eph.* v. 15–17).

This is but right. For scarcely does the will of man now retain even that love of right and justice which was implanted in the human heart by the almighty Creator, and which was intended to lead to the true good, and not to that which is only a shadow. This human will, thus depraved by the primal fault and forgetful of God, its Maker, directs everything to the cultivation of vanity and to the pursuit of falsehood. Blinded as it is by wicked desires, surely it needs a guide to lead it in the ways of justice, which unfortunately have been abandoned.

The natural guide, of course, is the human mind; but if the mind has not its proper light, that is, the knowledge of divine things, it will be the blind leading the blind, ending only in the ditch. The holy King David, while praising God for the light of truth with which He had illumined the intellect, exclaimed: "The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us." And he signified what was to follow from the possession of this gift of light, when he added: "Thou hast given gladness in my heart" (*Ps.* iv. 7); that is, a gladness with which the heart is dilated when it keeps in the way of God's commandments.

Whoever considers this will perceive how true it is that Christian truth, more perfectly than merely natural powers, shows us the nature of God and His infinite perfections.

Why should this not be so? Christian truth bids us revere almighty God by faith, which is an act of the mind; by hope, which is an act of the will; by charity, which is an act of the heart; and thus it subjects the whole man to the supreme Author and Ruler. In the same way, the doctrine of Jesus Christ unfolds for us the

true nobility of human nature, inasmuch as it reveals man to be the son of the heavenly Father, after whose likeness He is made, and offers to Him an eternal and glorious reward. But from this very dignity with which man is invested and from our knowledge of it, Christ wishes us to learn that we should love one another, and that we should live as behooves the sons of light, "not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chamberings and impurities, not in contention and envy" (*Rom.* xiii. 13).

He likewise enjoins us to cast all our care upon God, knowing that He will provide for us. Moreover, not to speak of all these things in detail, does not the teaching of Christ appeal to the proud and command them to cultivate that humility of soul which is the origin of true glory? "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven" (*Matt.* xviii. 4). His doctrine teaches us that prudence of the spirit which wards off the prudence of the flesh; that justice which gives unto each his own; that fortitude which makes us ready to bear all things and with resolute heart to suffer for the sake of God and our eternal salvation. Finally, it teaches that tem-

perance by which, for the sake of the kingdom of God, we even love poverty, nay, by which we "glory in the cross of Christ, despising the shame." Hence it follows, that not only does Christian teaching illumine the mind and enable it to attain the truth, but it also inflames the will and enkindles that ardor which impels us to aspire to God and to unite ourselves with Him by the exercise of every virtue.

It is not Our purpose to assert, that depravity of the heart is inconsistent with the knowledge of religious truth. Would that facts did not prove the contrary! But We do say, that, where the mind is enveloped in the dark clouds of ignorance, there can be neither rectitude nor morality. It is true a man with eyes open can turn away from the right path, but the one who is blind is constantly in danger of doing so. Moreover, when the light of faith is not wholly extinct, there is always a hope of reformation; depravity of morals united with ignorance of truth, however, has scarcely any remedy, and leaves open the road leading to ruin.

Since, on the one hand, the evils resulting from ignorance are so numerous and serious, and since, on the other, religious

instruction is so much needed and so helpful, any one hopes in vain to fulfill his duty unless he knows what that duty is. Let us now stop to consider on whom the task devolves to do away with this fatal ignorance, and to impart to men's minds that knowledge which it is so necessary to possess.

As to the ones on whom it devolves, Venerable Brothers, there is no doubt. For this most important duty regards all those who are charged with the care of souls. These are bound by the precept of Christ to know and to feed the flock intrusted to them. To feed, however, is first of all to teach. "I will give you," promised God by Jeremias, "pastors according to your own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine" (*Jer.* iii. 15). Wherefore Paul the Apostle said, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel" (1 *Cor.* i. 17), indicating that the first duty of those who are placed in any position over the government of the Church is to instruct the faithful in sacred things.

We deem it superfluous to dwell at greater length in praising such instruction or in showing its value in the sight of God.

For there is no doubt that the pity which we manifest in relieving the wants of the poor is most acceptable to Him, but who will question the fact that far more acceptable are the care and labor by which we procure not transient benefits for the body, but eternal ones for souls by teaching and warning them. Certainly, nothing can be more desirable, nothing more pleasing than this to Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of immortal souls, Who said of Himself by Isaias, "He hath sent me to preach the Gospel to the poor" (*Luke* iv. 18).

It is important, Venerable Brothers, to emphasize and urge in a particular manner, that no duty weightier than this is appointed unto priests, and that by no obligation stricter than by this are they bound. In a priest, holiness of life must be accompanied by knowledge: "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge" (*Malach.* ii. 7); and the Church strongly insists on this for those who are about to enter the sacred ministry. Wherefore does she so insist? Because the Christian people expect the knowledge of divine law from them, and God chooses them to impart this: "They shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts"

(*Malach.* ii. 7). On account of this, the bishop at ordination thus addresses the candidates for the priesthood: "Let your doctrine be the spiritual medicine of the people of God; let them be provident helpers of our order, that, meditating on the law day and night, they may believe what they read, and teach what they have believed" (Pontif. Rom.). If these words apply to all priests, what must be thought of those who, having official rank and dignity, are charged with the government of souls by virtue of their priestly office and, as it were, by a sacred contract! These are the pastors and doctors whom Christ hath given, that the faithful may be "no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men; but that, by doing the truth in charity, they may in all things grow up in Him Who is the Head, even Christ (*Eph.* iv. 14–15).

Wherefore, the holy Council of Trent, while considering the pastors of souls, declared that their first and chief duty was to teach the faithful of Christ. Hence it commands them to explain the truths of religion to the people at least on Sundays and the more solemn festivals, and also on

every day, or certainly three times a week during the holy season of Advent and Lent. More than this, it adds that parish priests are bound, at least on these Sundays and festivals, either personally or by others, to instruct the children in the truths of faith and to train them in obedience to God and their parents. Moreover, when the sacraments are to be administered, it orders that those who are about to receive them should be instructed in plain and simple language concerning their effects.

These prescriptions of the holy Synod, Our Predecessor, Benedict XIV, thus summarized and more distinctly defined in his constitution *Etsi minime:* "Two duties in particular are imposed by the Council of Trent on the guardians of souls: one, that they should speak to the people about divine things on festival days; the other, that they should instruct children and all persons of lesser intelligence in the rudiments of faith and of the divine law." Rightly, indeed, does this prudent Pontiff distinguish the twofold office: that of delivering an address, which is usually called an explanation of the Gospel, and that of teaching Christian doctrine. For some may be found who, for the sake of lessen-

ing labor, persuade themselves that the homily may take the place of catechism. The mistake of such a persuasion is evident to all who reflect. The sermon on the Gospel is addressed to those who have been already imbued with the elements of faith. It may be called the bread distributed to grown people. Catechetical teaching, however, is the milk which the apostle Peter wished the people guilelessly to desire. That is to say, the catechist's office consists in taking up for explanation a truth pertaining to faith or morals, and making this clear from every point of view. Moreover, since the purpose of teaching should be amendment of life, the catechist must bring into comparison what God commands to be done and what men as a matter of fact are doing. Then, using opportunely examples drawn from the Holy Scriptures, Church history, or the lives of the saints, he must persuade his hearers, and clearly point out to them how they are to set in order their conduct. Finally, he must exhort all present to abhor and flee from vice and to pursue a life of virtue.

We understand thoroughly that the teaching of Christian doctrine is to not a

few an unattractive duty, one not generally held in high estimation, or perhaps not likely to attract popular praise. But as for Ourself, We consider that such an opinion is founded rather on thoughtlessness than truth. The sacred orators who, from a sincere desire of glorifying God, justify and defend the Faith, or proclaim the glories of the saints, are certainly to be praised. But the work of the orator supposes a preceding one; namely, that of the catechist. If this has been omitted, the foundations on which to build the house have not been laid. Too often do those ornate discourses, which receive the loud applause of crowded assemblages, serve only to tickle men's ears, without moving at all their hearts. Catechetical instruction, however, although unpretentious and simple, is that word to which God Himself beareth witness by Isaias: "As the rain and snow come down from heaven and return no more thither, but soak the earth and water it, and make it to spring and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for

which I sent it" (*Is.* lv. 10–11). A like opinion should we form of those priests who laboriously write books in defense of the truth of religion. They are certainly worthy of much praise. But how many persons will study those volumes and draw from them profit commensurate with the author's labor and desire? The explanation of Christian doctrine, however, if it be duly given, is never without fruit for the hearers. It will further inflame the zeal of God's ministers to remind them of the enormous and constantly increasing number of those who either know nothing at all of religion, or else whose knowledge of God and of Christian faith is such, that amid the light of Catholic truth they lead the lives of idolaters. How many, alas! there are, not only children, but adults, who are entirely unacquainted, even at an advanced age, with the principle mysteries of faith; and who on hearing the name of Christ ask: "Who is He that I may believe in Him?" (*John* ix. 36). From this cause it results that they foment hatred between men; they form criminal associations; they engage in dishonest business; they usuriously seize the property of others; and they consider

these and similar things no crime. Hence, ignoring the law of Christ, which condemns not only unclean deeds, but also thoughts and desires, although for one reason or another they refrain, perhaps, from obscene pleasures, still they reject no sinful thought. There being no religion in their hearts, their sins are multiplied beyond the hairs of their heads. These things, in truth, as we should well remember, occur not only among the rude and the wretched, but also, and perhaps more frequently, among persons of higher station and among those whom science inflates, who, in the conceit of their vain learning, deem religion a thing to be laughed at, and "blaspheme whatever things they know not" (*Jude* i. 10).

Now if it is vain to expect a harvest from ground which has received no seed, how shall we look for good morals from a generation which has not received Christian instruction? Wherefore, since the Faith has so languished that in many persons it seems to be dying, we justly conclude, that the duty of catechetical instruction must have been negligently performed or altogether omitted. To contend that faith is a gratuitous gift conferred on each

one in Baptism, is but a false excuse. All who are baptized in Christ do receive, it is true, the habit of faith; but this most divine seed does not "grow up and shoot out great branches" (*Mark* iv. 32) by its own innate power. As man possesses from birth the faculty of understanding, which needs a mother's prompting to develop into efficiency; so in like manner the Christian, when born again of water and the Holy Ghost, is imbued with faith, but needs Christian formation, that this faith may be fostered and may increase and bear fruit. Hence the Apostle wrote: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ." Moreover, that he might show the necessity of teaching, he added, "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

If, therefore, it is clear, from all that has been hitherto said how important the religious training of the people is, it should be our greatest concern that the teaching of Christian doctrine, than which, to use the words of Our Predecessor, Benedict XIV, nothing more useful has been instituted, should always be vigorously maintained, and, where it has fallen into disuse, restored.

Therefore, Venerable Brothers, wishing to satisfy the weighty obligations of Our high and apostolic office, and desiring to see uniformity of custom everywhere established in a matter which is so important, We do decree and strictly command, that in all dioceses throughout the world the following regulations be observed and enforced:

I. All parish priests, and in general all to whom the care of souls is committed, must teach the catechism for the space of one hour on all Sundays and holydays of the year without exception to their young boys and girls, explaining to them what each is bound to believe and practise in order to attain eternal salvation.

II. They shall also at stated times in the year carefully prepare these children for the sacraments of Penance and Confirmation, by courses of instruction extending through many days.

III. Likewise, by means of appropriate instructions and exhortations, given every day during the Lenten season, and if necessary also after Easter, they shall with the greatest care and diligence prepare these young people of both sexes for a worthy reception of their first holy communion.

IV. Let there be established in every parish the association commonly known as the Society of Christian Doctrine, by mean of which, especially where the number of priests is small, pastors may secure lay help to assist in teaching catechism; and these lay teachers should apply themselves to their task out of zeal for the glory of God, as well as from a desire to gain the rich indulgences profusely granted by the Roman Pontiffs.

V. In the larger cities, especially where there are public academies, colleges, and universities, let classes in religious doctrine be established, for the purpose of teaching the truths of our faith and the precepts of Christian morality to the youths who attend public institutions such as these, wherein no mention whatever is made of religion.

VI. And since, in our times especially, those more advanced in years stand in no less need of religious instruction than the young, all pastors and others having charge of souls shall, on Sundays and holydays, and at an hour most convenient for the majority of the faithful, instruct them in the catechism, using plain and simple language, adapted to their intelligence.

This teaching of adults, moreover, is to be in addition to the usual homily on the Gospel prescribed for the parish Mass, and the hour chosen should not conflict with that of the children's instruction. In all these instructions, the catechism of the Council of Trent should be followed, and they ought to be so ordered as to cover in the space of four or five years the entire matter of the Apostles' Creed, the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, Prayer, and the Precepts of the Church.

All this, Venerable Brethren, We determine and decree by Our apostolic authority; it will now be your duty, each in his own diocese, to put these decrees into effect immediately and in their every detail.

Moreover, it will be incumbent on you to be vigilant in this matter, using your authority unto the end, that what We now enjoin be not overlooked and forgotten, or, which would be as bad, that it be not put into effect negligently and listlessly. Now, if you would prevent such a result, you must constantly exhort and urge your pastors not to attempt these catechetical instructions offhand, but rather to prepare for them with the utmost care. For if they prepare themselves in this way, they

will not discourse in the words of human wisdom, but "in simplicity of heart and the sincerity of God." Let them imitate Christ Himself, Who though uttering "things hidden from the foundation of the world" (*Matt.* xiii. 35), nevertheless declared all things "in parables to the multitudes; and without parables He did not speak to them" (*Matt.* xiii. 34). We know that the apostles also who were trained by Our Lord did the same. St. Gregory the Great used to say of them, that "their greatest care was to preach to the simple people the plainest truths, things not high and lofty, but such as they could easily comprehend." And in matters of religion it is the same now as then; most men are to be moved and won by that which is most simple and direct.

Now it would be a mistake and contrary to Our intention, were any one to conclude from what we have said about striving after simplicity in religious instruction, that a discourse of this sort calls for no effort, for no thoughtful preparation. On the contrary, it demands much more than any other kind of public speaking. Far easier is it to find an orator who can deliver an elaborate and brilliant sermon, than a catechist able to give a simple but

flawless instruction. Therefore, however much one may be gifted by nature with ease in composition or fluency of expression, let him nevertheless be persuaded of this, that, unless he has prepared himself well by long and careful study and meditation, the children or the people will not derive any real spiritual fruit from his instruction on Christian doctrine. To count on the people's ignorance and slowness of comprehension, and to use this as an excuse for negligence in the work of preparation, is a grievous mistake. As a matter of fact, the less cultured one's audience is, the greater are the care and pains required for bringing within the reach of their feebler comprehension those truths which are most sublime and which are far above the grasp of the ordinary intelligence, but which nevertheless are as necessary for salvation to the ignorant as to the learned.

And now, Venerable Brethren, before closing this letter, We shall address to you the words of Moses: "If any man be on the Lord's side, let him join with me" (*Ex.* xxxii. 26). Consider well, We entreat and beseech you, how great is the loss to souls which arises from this one cause, ignorance of the things of God.

There may, no doubt, be many useful and praiseworthy works established in your diocese for the good of the flock entrusted to you, yet it should be your desire and ambition, before all else, to urge this present matter with all possible zeal and insistence, and to work for the promotion of this one great end, that the knowledge of Christian doctrine may thoroughly pervade and imbue the minds of all the faithful. In the words of the apostle St. Peter: "As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 *Peter* iv. 10).

And while the most blessed and immaculate Virgin will continually intercede for the success of your earnest and zealous efforts, they shall also be favored by Our apostolic benediction, which We lovingly impart to yourselves, to your clergy, and to the faithful under your care, both as a testimony of Our affection and as a pledge of heavenly graces.

PIUS X, Pope.

St. Peter's, Rome, April 15, 1905, in the second year of Our Pontificate.

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